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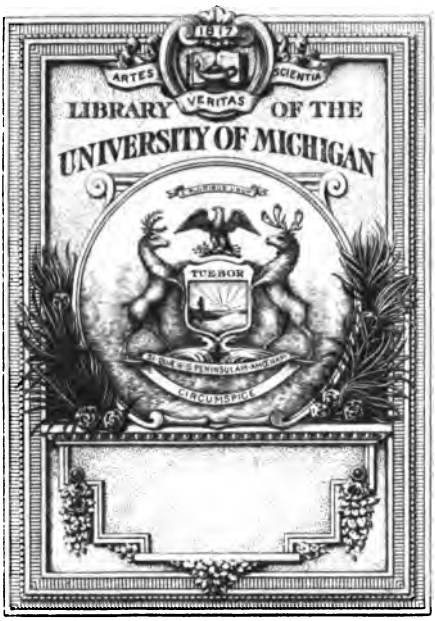

THE GIFT OF
Mrs. Lee A. White

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CHAIROLAS,

PRINCE OF PAIDA.

BY THE AUTHOR OF

"PELHAM," "EUGENE ARAM," &c. &c.

WITH OTHER TALES.

BY THE AUTHORS OF

"VIVIAN GREY," "SAYINGS AND DOINGS," "HIGHWAYS AND BY-WAYS," &c. &c.

PHILADELPHIA:
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Mrs. Lee a. White
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CHAIROLAS,

PRINCE OF PAIDA.

BY THE AUTHOR OF PELHAM, &c. &c.

Once upon a time there existed a kingdom called Paida, stretching to the west of that wide tract of land known to certain ancient travellers by the name of Callipaga. The heirs-apparent to the throne of this kingdom were submitted to a very singular ordeal: at the extremity of the empire was a chain of mountains which separated Paida from an immense region, the chart of which no geographer had ever drawn. Various and contradictory were all the accounts of this region, from the eldest to the latest time. According to some, it was the haunt of robbers and demons. Every valley was beset with danger; the fruits of every tree were poisonous; and evil spirits lurked in every path, sometimes to fascinate, and sometimes to terrify the inexperienced traveller to his destruction. Others, on the contrary, asserted, that no other land on earth equalled the beauty and the treasures of this mystic region; the purest air cir-

culated over the divinest landscapes; the inhabitants were beneficent genii; and the life they led was that of happiness without alloy, and excitement without satiety. At the age of twenty, the heir to the throne was ordained by immemorial custom to penetrate alone into this debated and enigmatical realm. It was supposed to require three years to traverse the whole of it; nor was it until this grand tour for the royalty of Paida was completed, that the adventurer was permitted to return home and aspire to the heritage of the crown. It happened, however, that a considerable proportion of these travellers never again re-entered their native land; detained, according to some, by the beautiful fairies of the unknown region; or, according to others, sacrificed by its fiends. One might imagine that those princes, who were fortunate enough to return, (too respectable travellers to be addicted to gratuitous invention,) would have been enabled by their testimony to reconcile the various reports of the country into which they penetrated. But after their return, the austere habits of royalty compelled them to discretion and reserve; and the hints which had escaped them from time to time, when conversing with their more confidential courtiers, so far from elucidating, confirmed the mystery; for each of the princes had evidently met with a different fortune: with one; the reminiscences bequeathed by his journey seemed brilliant and delightful; while, perhaps, with his successor, the unknown region was never alluded to without a shudder or a sigh. Thus, the only persons who could have reconciled conflicting rumours,

were exactly those who the most kept alive the debate; and the empire was still divided into two parties, who, according to the bias of their several dispositions, represented the neighbouring territory as an Elysium or a Tartarus.

The present monarch had, of course, undergone the customary ordeal: naturally bold and cheerful, he had commenced his eventful journey with eagerness and hope, and had returned to Paida an altered and melancholy man. He swayed his people with great ability and success; he entered into all the occupations of his rank, and did not reject its pleasures and its pomps, but it was evident that his heart was not with his pursuits. He was a prey to some secret regret; but whether he sighed to regain the land he had left, or was saddened by the adventures he had known, was a matter of doubt and curiosity even to his queen

Several years of his wedded life were passed without promise of an heir, and the eyes of the people were already turned to the eldest nephew of the sovereign, when it was formally announced to the court that the queen had been graciously pleased to become in the family way.

In due process of time a son made his appearance. He was declared a prodigy of beauty; and there was something remarkably regal in the impatience of his cries. Nothing could exceed the joy of the court, unless it was the grief of the king's eldest nephew. The king himself, indeed, was perhaps also an exception to the general rapture. He looked wistfully on the

crimson cheeks of his first-born, and muttered to himself, "These boys are a great subject of anxiety."

"And of pride," said a small sweet voice, that came from the cradle.

The king was startled; for even in Paida a king's son does not speak as soon as he is born. He looked again at the little prince's face: it was not from him that the voice came; his royal highness had just fallen asleep.

"Dost thou not behold me, O king!" said the voice again. And now the monarch beheld upon the pillow a small creature scarcely taller than a needle, but whose shape was modelled in the most beautiful proportions of manhood.

"Know," continued the apparition, while the king remained silent with consternation, "that I am the good genius of the new-born. Each mortal hath at his birth his guardian spirit, though the genius be rarely visible. I bring to thy son the three richest gifts that can be bestowed upon man; but, alas! they are difficult to preserve. Teach him to guard them as his most precious treasure."

The genius vanished; the king recovered from his amaze; and, expecting to find some jewels of enormous value, hastily lifted the coverlet, and saw by the side of his child an eagle's feather, a pigeon's feather, and a little tuft of the down of a swan.

CHAPTER II.

The prince grew up, strong, handsome, and graceful. He evinced the most amiable dispositions. He had much of that tender and romantic enthusiasm which we call sentiment, and which serves to render the virtues so lovely. He had an intuitive admiration for all that is daring and noble; and his ambition would, perhaps, have led him into dangerous excesses, were it not curbed, or purified, by a singular disinterestedness and benevolence of disposition, which rendered him fearful to injure those with whom he came into contact, and anxious to serve them. The union of such qualities was calculated to conduct him to glory, but to render him scrupulous as to its means. His desire to elevate himself was strong, but it was blended with a stronger wish to promote the welfare of others. Princes of this nature were not common at Paida, and the people looked with the most sanguine hopes to the prospect of his reign. He had, however, some little drawbacks to the effect of his good qualities. His susceptibilities made him too easy with his friends, and somewhat too bashful with strangers: with the one he found it difficult to refuse any thing, with the other he was too keenly alive to ridicule and the fear of shame. But the first was a failing very easily forgiven at a court, and the second

was one that a court would in all probability correct. The king took considerable pains with the prince's education. His talents were great, and he easily mastered whatever he undertook. But at each proof of the sweetness of his disposition, or the keenness of his abilities, the good king seemed to feel rather alarm than gratification. Alas!" he would mutter to himself, "that fatal region; that perilous ordeal!" and then turn hastily away.

These words fed the prince's curiosity without much exciting his fear. The journey presented nothing terrible to his mind; for the courtiers, according to their wont, deemed it disloyal to detail to him any but the most flattering accounts of the land he was to visit; and he attributed the broken expressions of his father partly to the melancholy of his constitution, and partly to the over-acuteness of paternal anxiety. For the rest it was a pleasant thing to get rid of his tutors, and the formalities of a court. And with him, as with all the young, hope was an element in which fear could not breathe. He longed for his twentieth year, and forgot to enjoy the pleasures of boyhood in his anticipation of the excitements of youth.

CHAPTER III.

THE fatal time arrived; the prince Chairolas had taken leave of his weeping mother, embraced his friends, and was receiving the last injunctions of his father, while his horses impatiently snorted at the gates of the palace.

"My son," said the king, with more than his usual gravity, "from the journey you are about to make you are nearly sure of returning a wiser man, but you may not return a better one. The three charms which you have always worn about your person you must be careful to preserve." Here the king recited for the first time to the wondering prince the adventure of his birth. Chairolas had always felt a lively curiosity to know why, from his infancy, he had been compelled to wear about his royal person three things so apparently worthless as an eagle's feather, a pigeon's feather, and the tuft of a swan's down; and still more, why such seeming trifles had been gorgeously set in jewels. The secret now made known to him elevated his self-esteem. He was evidently, then, a favourite with the superior powers, and marked from his birth for no ordinary destinies.

"Alas!" concluded the king, "had *I* received such talismans, perhaps,"—he broke off abruptly,

once more embraced his son, and hastened to shroud his meditations in the interior of his palace.

Mean while, the prince set out upon his journey: the sound of the wind-instruments upon which his guards played cheerily; the caracoles of his favourite charger, the excitement of the fresh air, the sense of liberty, and the hope of adventure, all conspired to elevate his spirits. He forgot father, mother, and home. Never was a journey undertaken under gayer presentiments, or by a more joyous mind.

CHAPTER IV.

At length the prince arrived at the spot where his attendants were to quit him. It was the entrance of a narrow defile, through precipitous and lofty mountains; wild trees of luxuriant foliage grew thickly along the path: it seemed a primeval vale, desolate even in its beauty, as though man had never trodden it before. The prince paused for a moment: his friends and followers gathered round him with their adieus, and tears, and wishes; but still hope inspired and animated him. He waved his hand gaily, spurred his steed, and the trees soon concealed his form from the gaze of his retinue.

He proceeded for some time with slowness and difficulty, so entangled was the soil by its matted herbage, so obstructed was the path by the inter-

laced and sweeping boughs. At length, towards evening, the ground became more open, and, descending a gentle hill, a green and lovely plain spread itself before him. It was intersected by rivulets, and variegated with every species of plant and tree. It was a garden in which Nature seemed to have shown how well she can dispense with Art. The prince would have been very much enchanted if he had not begun to be very hungry, and for the first time he recollected that it was possible to be starved. He looked anxiously, but vainly, round for some sign of habitation, and then he regarded the trees to see if they bore fruit: but, alas! it was the spring of the year; and he could only console himself with observing, that the abundance of the blossoms promised plenty of fruit for the autumn—a long time for a prince to wait for his dinner!

He still, however, continued to proceed, when suddenly he came upon a beaten track, evidently made by art. His horse neighed as its hoofs rung upon the hardened soil; and, breaking of itself into a quicker pace, soon came to a wide arcade overhung with roses. "This must conduct to some mansion," thought Chairolas; but night came on, and still the prince was in the arcade: the stars, peeping through here and there, served to guide his course, until, at length, lights more earthly and more brilliant broke upon him. The arcade ceased, and Chairolas found himself at the gates of a mighty city, over whose terraces, rising one above the other, the moon shone bright and still.

"Who is there?" asked a voice at the gate.

"Chairolas, prince of Paida," answered the traveller.

The gates opened instantly: "Princes are ever welcome at the City of Chrysaor," said the same voice.

And as Chairolas entered, he saw himself instantly surrounded by a group of both sexes, richly attired, bending to the earth with eastern adoration; while, as with a single voice, they chanted out, "Welcome to the prince of Paida!"

A few minutes more, and Chairolas was in the magnificent chamber of a magnificent house: the rarest viands, the richest wines, covered the board before him; and the attendants, with the most delicate sensibility, left him to himself.

"All this is delightful," thought the prince, as he finished his supper; but I see nothing of either fairies or fiends." His soliloquy was interrupted by the master of the mansion, who came to conduct the prince to his couch. Scarce was his head upon his pillow ere he fell asleep;—a sure sign that he was a stranger at Chrysaor, where the prevalent disease was the want of rest.

The next day, almost ere Chairolas was dressed, his lodging was besieged by all the courtiers of the city. He found that though his dialect was a little different from theirs, the language itself was much the same: for, perhaps, there is no court in the universe where a prince is not tolerably understood. The servile adulation Chairolas had experienced in Paida was not nearly so delightful as the polished ad-

miration he received from the courtiers of Chrysaor: while they preserved that tone of equality, without which all society is but the interchange of ceremonies, they evinced, by a thousand nameless and subtle expressions, their respect for his good qualities, which they seemed to penetrate as by an instinct. The gaiety, the life, the grace of those he saw, perfectly intoxicated the prince. He was immediately involved in a round of engagements. It was impossible that he should ever be alone.

CHAPTER V.

As the confusion of first impressions wore off, Chairolas remarked a singular peculiarity in the manners of his new friends. They were the greatest laughers he had ever met. Not that they laughed loud, or made much noise, but that they laughed constantly. This habit was not attended with any real merriment, or happiness: many of the saddest persons laughed the most. What was yet more strange, the principal objects of these cachinnatory ebullitions were precisely those which Chairolas had been taught to consider the most removed from ludicrous associations. They never laughed at any thing witty, or humorous, at a comedy, or a joke; but if one of their friends became poor, then how they laughed at his poverty! If a son broke the heart of his father, or a wife ran away from her husband, or a great lord cheated at play, or ruined his tradesmen, then they had no

command over their muscles, they laughed ready to kill themselves: in a word, misfortune, or vice, was one principal object of this epidemical affection. But besides this, they laughed at any thing that differed from their general habits: if a lady blushed, if a sage talked wisdom, if a man did any thing uncommon, no matter what, they were instantly seized with these jovial convulsions: they laughed at generosity, they laughed at sentiment, they laughed at patriotism, and, though affecting to be exceedingly pious, they laughed with particular pleasure at any extraordinary show of religion.

Chairolas was extremely puzzled, for he saw that if they laughed at what was bad, they laughed also at what was good; it seemed as if they had no other mode of condemning or applauding. But what perplexed him yet more, was a strange transformation to which this people were subject. Their faces were apt to turn, even in a single night, into enormous rhododendrons. And it was very common to see a human figure walking about as gaily as possible, with a flower upon his shoulders instead of a face. Resolved to enlighten himself as to this peculiarity of custom, Chairolas one day took aside a courtier, who appeared to him the most intelligent of his friends. Grinaldibus Hassan Sneeraskin, (so was the courtier termed,) laughed longer than ever, when he heard the perplexity of the prince. "Know," said he, as soon as he had composed himself, "that there are two penal codes in this city. For one set of persons whom you and I never see, except in the streets, persons who cut

the wood and draw the water, persons who work for the other class, we have punishments, such as hanging, and flogging, and shutting up in prison, and heaven knows what; punishments, in short, that are contained in the ninety-nine volumes of the Hatchet and Rope Pandects. But for the other class with whom you mix every day, (the very best society in short,) we have another code, which punishes only by laughter; and you have no notion how severe the punishment is considered! It is thus that we keep our social system in order, and laugh folly and error out of countenance.

"An admirable, a most gentle code!" cried the prince: but, (he added, after a moment's reflection,) "I see you sometimes laughing at what seems to me most praiseworthy, as well as most vicious."

"Not at all! your highness is mistaken; we never laugh at people who do exactly like the rest of us; we only laugh at whatever is odd; and with us, oddity is a crime!"

"Oddity even in virtue?"

"Precisely so."

"But those persons with rhododendrons instead of faces?"

"Are the worst of our criminals. If we continue to laugh at persons above a certain time, their faces undergo the transformation you have witnessed, no matter how handsome they were before."

"This is, indeed, laughing people out of countenance," said Chairolas, amazed: "what an affliction!"

"Indeed it is."

"Take care," added Grinaldibus Hassan Sneeraskin, with paternal unction; "take care that you never do any thing to deserve a laugh; the torture is inexpressible, the transformation is awful."

CHAPTER VI.

This conversation threw Chairolas into a profound reverie. The charm of the society he had shared in was invaded; it now admitted restraint and fear. If ever he should be laughed at! if ever he became a rhododendron! Terrible thought! He remembered various instances he had hitherto but little observed, in which he more than suspected that he had already been unconsciously afflicted with symptoms of this gravest of all calamities. His reason allowed the justice of his apprehension; for he could not flatter himself that in all respects he was exactly like the courtiers of Chrysaor.

That night he went to a splendid entertainment given by the prime minister. Conscious of great personal attractions, and magnificently attired, he felt, at his first entrance into the gorgeous halls, the flush of youthful and elated vanity. It was his custom to wear upon his breast one of his most splendid ornaments; it was the tuft of the fairy swan's down, set in brilliants of inestimable price. Something there was in this ornament which shed a kind of

charm over his whole person: it gave a more interesting dignity to his mien, a loftier aspect to his brow, a deeper and a softer expression to his eyes:—so potent is the present of a fairy, as all our science upon such subjects assures us.

Still as Chairolas passed through the rooms he perceived, with a thrill of terror, that a smile, ill-suppressed, met him at every side; and when he turned his head to look back, he perceived that the fatal smile had broadened into a laugh. All his complacency vanished, terror and shame possessed him; yes, he was certainly laughed at! He felt his face itching already,—certainly the leaves were sprouting. He hastened to escape from the crowded rooms, passed into the lighted and voluptuous gardens, and seated himself in a retired and sequestered alcove. Here he was surprised by the beautiful Mikra; a lady to whom he had been paying assiduous court, and who appeared to take a lively interest in his affairs.

"Prince Chairolas here!" cried the lady, seating herself by his side; "alone too, and sad!—How is this?"

"Alas!" answered the prince, despondingly, "I feel that I am regarded as a criminal, how can I hope for your love? In a word—dreadful confession—I am certainly laughed at,—I shall assuredly blossom in a week or two. Light of my eyes! deign to compassionate my affliction, and inform my ignorance. Acquaint me with the crime I have committed."

"Prince," said the gentle Mikra, much moved by her lover's dejection, "do not speak thus; perhaps I ought to have spared you this pain: but then delicacy restrained me!"

"Speak! speak, in mercy!"

"Well, then; but pardon me; that swan's down tuft, it is charming, beautiful—it becomes you exceedingly: but at Chrysaor nobody wears a swan's down tuft: you understand?"

"And it is for this, then, that I may be rhododendrised!" exclaimed Chairolas.

"Indeed, I fear so."

"Away, treacherous gift!" exclaimed the prince; and he tore off the fairy ornament. He dashed it to the ground, and left the alcove. The fair Mikra staid behind to pick up the diamonds: the swan's down itself had vanished; or, at least, it was invisible to the fine lady of Chrysaor.

CHAPTER VII.

With the loss of his swan's down, Prince Chairolas recovered his self-complacency. No one laughed at him in future. He was relieved from the fear of efflorescence; for awhile he was happy: but months glided away, and the prince grew tired of his sojourn at Chrysaor. The sight of the same eternal faces and the same eternal rhododendrons, the sound of the same eternal laughter, wearied him to death.

He resolved to pursue his travels. Accordingly, he quarrelled with Mikra, bade adieu to his friends, and, mounting his favourite steed, departed from the walls of Chrysaor. He took the precaution this time of hiring some attendants at Chrysaor, who carried with them provisions: a single one of the many jewels he bore about him would more than have sufficed to purchase the service of half Chrysaor.

Although he had derived so little advantage from one of the fairy gifts, he naturally thought he might be more fortunate with the rest. The pigeon's feather was appropriate enough to travelling (for we may suppose that it was a carrier-pigeon;) accordingly, he placed it amidst the plumage of his cap. He spent some few days in rambling about, until he found he had entered a country unknown even to his guides. The landscape was more flat and less luxuriant than that which had hitherto cheered his way; the sun was less brilliant, and the sky seemed nearer to the earth.

While gazing round him, he became suddenly aware of the presence of a stranger, who, stationed right before his horse, stretched forth his hand, and thus accosted him: "O, thrice noble and generous traveller! save me from starvation! Heaven smiles upon one to whom it has given the inestimable treasure of a pigeon's feather! may Heaven continue to lavish its blessings upon you!—mean while, spare me a trifle." The charitable Chairolas ordered his purse-bearer to relieve the wants of the stranger,

and then inquired the name of the country they had entered. He was informed that it was termed Apatia; and that its inhabitants were singularly cordial to travellers, "especially," added the mendicant, "if they possess that rarest of earthly gifts, the feather of a pigeon."

"Well," thought Chairolas, "my good genius evidently intends to make up for his mistake about the swan's down. Doubtless the pigeon's feather will be exceedingly serviceable." He desired the mendicant to guide him to the nearest city of Apatia, which fortunately happened to be the metropolis.

On entering the streets, Chairolas was struck with the exceeding bustle and animation of the inhabitants. Far from the indolent luxury of Chrysaor, every thing breathed of activity, enterprise, and toil. The place resembled a fortified town; the houses were built of ponderous stone; a drawbridge to each; the windows were barred with iron; a sentinel guarded every portico. "Is there a foreign invasion without the walls?" asked the prince.—"No," answered the mendicant; "but here every man guards against his neighbour: take care of yourself, noble sir." So saying, the grateful Apatian picked the prince's pockets, and disappeared amidst the crowd.

CHAPTER VIII.

THE prince found himself no less courted in the capital of Apatia than he had been in Chrysaor: but society was much less charming. He amused himself by going out in the streets incognito, and watching the manners of the inhabitants. He found them addicted to the most singular pursuits. One game consisted in setting up a straw, and shooting arrows at it blindfold. If you missed the mark you paid dearly; if you hit it you made a fortune. Many persons ruined themselves at this game. Another amusement consisted in giving certain persons trained for the purpose, and dressed in long gowns, a quantity of gold; in return for which, they threw dirt at you. The game was played thus:—Two persons found, each, one of these gownsmen, gave him the required quantity of gold, and then stood to be pelted at in a large tennis-court. If the gownsman employed against you dirtied you more than your gownsman dirtied your antagonist, you were stripped naked, and turned adrift in the streets: but if your antagonist was the most bespattered, you won your game, and received back half the gold you had given to your gownsman! This was a most popular diversion. They had various other amusements, all of the same kind, in which the chief entertainment was the certainty of loss. For the rest, the common occupa-

tion was quarrelling with each other, buying and selling, picking pockets, and making long speeches about liberty and glory.

Chairolas found that the pigeon's feather was every where a passport to favour: but in a short time this produced its annoyances. His room was besieged by applications for charity—in vain he resisted. No man with a pigeon's feather, he was assured, ever refused assistance to the poor. All the ladies in the city were in love with him—all the courtiers were his friends; they adored, and they plundered him; and the reason of the adoration and the plunder was the pigeon's feather.

One day he found his favourite friend, with his favourite fair one—a fair one so favoured, that he had actually proposed, and had actually been accepted. Their familiarity and their treachery were evident. Chairolas drew his sabre, and would certainly have slain them both, if the lady's screams had not brought the king's guards into the room. They took all three before the judge. He heard the case gravely, and sentenced Chairolas to forego the lady, and pay the costs of the sentence.

"Base foreigner that you are," he said gravely; "and, unmindful of your honour, have you not trusted your friend and believed in her you loved? Have you not suffered them to be often together? If you had been an honourable man, you would know that you must always watch a woman and suspect a friend—Go!"

As Chairolas was retiring, half choked with rage

and shame, the lady seized him by the arm. "Ah," she whispered, "I should never have deceived you but for the pigeon's feather."

Chairolas threw himself on his bed, and, exhausted by grief, fell fast asleep. When he woke the next morning, he found that his attendants had disappeared with the bulk of his jewels. They left behind them a scroll containing these words:—"A man with so fine a pigeon's feather will never hang us for stealing."

Chairolas flung the feather out of the window. The wind blew it away in an instant. An hour afterwards he had mounted his steed, and was already beyond the walls of the capital of Apatia.

CHAPTER IX.

At nightfall the prince found himself at the gates of a lofty castle. Wearied and worn out, he blew the horn suspended at the portals, and demanded food and shelter. No voice answered; but the gates opened of their own accord. Chairolas left his courser to feed at will on the herbage, and entered the castle—he passed through several magnificent chambers without meeting a soul, till he came to a small pavilion. The walls were curiously covered with violet and rose leaves, wrought in mosaic; the lights shone from jewels of a ruby glow, set in lotos leaves. The whole

spot breathed of enchantment: in fact, Chairolas had at length reached an enchanted castle.

Upon a couch, in an alcove, reclined a female form, covered with a veil studded with silver stars; but of a texture sufficiently transparent to permit Chairolas to perceive how singularly beautiful were the proportions beneath. The prince approached with a soft step—"Pardon me," he said, with a hesitating voice; "I fear that I disturb your repose." The figure made no reply; and, after a pause, Chairolas, unable to resist the desire to see the face of the sleeper, lifted the veil. Never had so beautiful a countenance broke even upon his dreams. The first bloom of youth shed its softest rose-hues over the cheek; the lips just parted in a smile which sufficed to call forth a thousand dimples. Nothing was wanting to complete the most perfect ideal of virgin beauty, save the eyes; but these were closed in a slumber so profound, that but for the hues of the cheek and the regular and ambrosial breathing of the lips, you might have imagined that the slumber was of death. Beside her on the couch lay a casket, on which the eyes of the prince resting caught these words engraved: "He alone who can unlock this casket will waken the sleeper; and he who finds the heart may claim the hand." Chairolas, transported with joy and hope, seized the casket: the key was in the lock—with trembling hands he sought to turn it in the hasp; it remained immoveable—it resisted his most strenuous efforts. Nothing could be more slight than the casket,

more minute than the key; but all the strength of Chairolas was insufficient to open the lock. Chairolas was in despair. He remained for days—for weeks—in the enchanted chamber: he neither ate nor slept during all that time. But such was the magic of the place, that he never once felt hunger or fatigue. Gazing upon that divine form, he, for the first time, felt all the rapture and intoxication of real love. He spent his days and nights in seeking to unclose the casket; sometimes in his rage he dashed it to the ground—he trampled upon it—he sought to break what he could not open;—in vain. One day, while thus employed, he heard the horn wind without the castle-gates: then steps echoed along the halls, and presently a stranger entered the enchanted pavilion. The new comer was neither old nor young, neither handsome nor ugly. He approached the alcove despite the menacing looks of the jealous prince. He gazed upon the sleeper, and, as he gazed, a low music breathed throughout the chamber. Surprised and awed, the casket fell from the hands of Chairolas. The intruder took it from the ground, read the inscription, and applied his hand to the key: it turned not—Chairolas laughed aloud—the stranger sighed, and drew forth from his breast a little tuft of swan's down; he laid it upon the casket, again turned the key, the casket opened at once, and within was a small golden heart. At that instant a voice broke from the heart: "Thou hast found the charm," it said, and at the same time the virgin woke; and as she bent her eyes upon the last comer she said, with

unutterable tenderness, "It is of thee, then, that I have so long dreamt." The stranger fell at her feet; and Chairolas, unable to witness his rival's happiness, fled from the pavilion.

"Accursed that I am!" he groaned aloud; "if I had not cast away the fairy gift she would have been mine!"

CHAPTER X.

For several days the unfortunate prince wandered through the woods and wastes, supporting himself on wild berries, and venting, in sighs and broken exclamations, his grief and rage. At length he came to the shores of a wide and glassy sea—a sea more lovely than ever in the odorous south basked in the purpling hues of an Ausonian sun. Its waves crisped over golden sands with a delicious and heavenly music; the air was scented with unspeakable fragrance, wafted from trees peculiar to the clime, and bearing at the same time the blossom and the fruit. At a slight distance from the shore was an island, which seemed one garden—the fabled bowers of the Hesperides. Studded it was with ivory palaces, delicious fountains, and streams that wound amidst groves of asphodel and amaranth. And every where throughout the island wandered groups whose faces the prince could distinctly see; and those faces were made beautiful by unruffled peace, and happiness unalloyed.

Laughter—how different from that of Chrysaor!—was wafted to his ear; and the boughs of the trees, as they waved to the fragrant wind, gave forth melodies more exquisite than ever woke from the lyres of Lycia or Ionia.

Wearied and exhausted, the prince gazed upon the happy isle, and longed to be a partaker of its bliss; when, turning his eyes a little to the right, he saw, from a winding in the shore on which he stood, a vessel with silken streamers, seemingly about to put off for the opposite isle. Several persons of either sex were crowding into the vessel, and already waving their hands to the groups upon the island. Chairolas hastened to the spot; he pushed impatiently through the crowd, who gave way at his imperious movements in surprise. He was about to enter the vessel, when a venerable old man stopped and accosted him.

"Would you go, stranger, to the Happy Isle?"

"Yes—quick, quick—let me pass!"

"Stranger, whoever would enter the vessel must comply first with the conditions, and pay the passage."

"I have some jewels left still," said Chairolas, haughtily; "I will pay the amount ten times over."

"We require neither jewels nor money," returned the old man, gravely: "what you must produce is the feather of a pigeon."

Chairolas shrunk back aghast. "Alas!" said he, "I have no longer a pigeon's feather."

The old man gazed at him with horror. The pas-

sengers set up a loud cry—"He has no pigeon's feather!" They pushed him back—the vessel parted, and Chairolas was left upon the strand.

CHAPTER XI.

Cursing his visits to Chrysaor and Apatia, which had cost him so dear, and given him so little in return, Chairolas tore himself from the sea-shore, and renewed his travels. Towards the noon of the following day he entered a valley covered with immense sunflowers and poppies. Any thing so gaudy he had never before beheld. Here and there were rocks evidently not made by nature; mounds raised by collections of various rubbish, and ornamented with artificial ruins and temples. Sometimes he passed through a grotto formed by bits of coloured glass and shells, made to imitate spars and even jewels. The only birds that inhabited the boughs were parrots and mock-birds. They made a most discordant din; but they meant it for imitations of nightingales and canaries. The flare of the poppies and the noise of the birds were at first intolerable; but by degrees the wanderer became used to them, and at length found them charming.

"How delightful this is!" said he, flinging himself under a yew-tree which was cut in the shape of a pagoda—"so cheerful, so gay! After all, I am as well off here as I should have been in the Happy

Isle: nay, I think there is a greater air of comfort in the sight of these warm sunflowers than in those eternal amaranths; and, certainly, the music of these parrots is exceedingly lively!" While thus soliloquizing, the prince saw an old baboon walk leisurely up to him. The creature supported itself upon a gold-headed staff; it wore a long wig and a three-cornered hat. It had a large star of coloured glass on its breast, and an apron of sky-blue around its middle. As the baboon approached, Chairolas was much struck by its countenance; the features were singularly intelligent and astute, and seemed even more so from a large pair of spectacles, which gave it a learned look about the eyes.

"Prince," said the baboon, "I am well acquainted with your adventures, and I think I can be of service to you in your present circumstances."

"Can you give me the lady I saw in the enchanted castle?"

"No," answered the baboon; "but a man who has seen so much of the world knows that after a little time one lady is not better than another."

"Can you then admit me to the Happy Isle?"

"No; but you said rightly, just now, that this valley was at least as agreeable."

"Can you give me back my tuft of swan's down and my pigeon's feather?"

"No; but I can imitate them so exactly that the imitations will be equally useful. Mean while, come and dine with me."

Chairolas followed the baboon into a cave, where

he was sumptuously served by pea-green monkeys, to dishes of barbecued squirrels. After dinner the baboon and the prince renewed their conversation. From his host Chairolas learned that the regions called the Unknown by the people of Paida were of unlimited extent, inhabited by various nations; that no two of his predecessors had ever met with the same adventures—though most of them had visited both Chrysaor and Apatia. The baboon declared he had been of use to them all. He was, indeed, an animal of exceeding age and experience, and had a perfect recollection of the cities before the deluge. He made out of the silky hair of a white fox a most excellent imitation of the lost tuft of swan's down; and from the breast of a vulture he plucked a feather, which any one at a distance might mistake for a pigeon's. Chairolas received them with delight.

"And now, prince," said the baboon, "observe that, while you may show these as openly as you please, it will be prudent to conceal the eagle's feather that you have yet left. No inconvenience results from parading the False, much danger from exhibiting the True. Take this little box of adamant; lock up the eagle's feather in it; and, whenever you meditate any scheme or exploit, open it and consult the feather. In future you will find that it has a voice, and can answer when you speak to it."

Chairolas staid some days in the baboon's valley, and then once more renewed his travels. What was his surprise to find himself, on the second day of his excursion, in the same defile as that which

had conducted him from his paternal realms! He computed, for the first time, the months he had spent in his wanderings, and found that the three years were just accomplished. In less than an hour the prince was at the mouth of the defile, where a numerous cavalcade had been for some days assembled to welcome his return, and conduct him home.

CHAPTER XII.

The young prince was welcomed at Paida with the greatest enthusiasm: every one found him prodigiously improved. He appeared in public with the false swan's down and the false pigeon's feather —they became him even better than the true ones; and, indeed, he had taken care to have them set in much more magnificent jewels. But the prince was a prey to one violent and master passion—ambition. This, indeed, had always been a part of his character; but previous to his travels it had been guided by generous and patriotic impulses—it was so no longer. He spent whole days in conversing with the eagle's feather; though the feather, indeed, never said but one word, which was, "War." At that time a neighbouring people had chosen five persons instead of two to inspect the treasury accounts.—Chairolas affected to be horror-struck with the innovation; he declared it boded no good to Paida;

he declaimed against it night and day. At last he so inflamed the people, that, despite the reluctance of the king, war was declared: an old general of great renown headed the army; Chairolas was appointed second in command. They had scarcely reached the confines of the enemy's country, when Chairolas became no less unhappy than before. "Second in command—why not first?" He consulted his demon feather—it said "First:" it spoke no other word. The old general was slow in his movements; he pretended that it was unwise to risk a battle at so great a distance from the capital; but, in reality, he hoped the appearance of his army would awe the enemy into replacing the two treasurers, and so secure the object of the war without bloodshed. Chairolas penetrated this design, so contrary to his projects: he wrote home to his father, and accused the general of taking bribes from the enemy. The old king readily believed one whom the fairy had so endowed: the general was recalled and beheaded —Chairolas succeeded to the command. He hastened to march to the city, which he took and burnt; but, instead of replacing the two treasurers, he appointed one chief (himself,) and twenty subordinate treasurers (his officers.) Never was prince so popular as Chairolas on his return from his victories. He was intoxicated by the sweetness of power and the desire of yet greater glory; he longed to reign—he sighed to think his father was so healthy: he shut himself up in his room, and talked to his feather; its word now was,

"King." Shortly afterwards, Chairolas (who was the idol of the soldiers) seized the palace, and issued a proclamation that his father was in his dotage, and had abdicated the throne in his favour. The king was put into prison, and a day or two afterwards found dead in his bed. Chairolas mourned for three months, and every body compassionated his grief. From that time Chairolas, now the monarch of Paida, gave himself up to his ruling passion: he extended his fame from east to west: he was called the Great Chairolas. But his subjects became tired of war; their lands were ravaged—their treasury exhausted—new taxes were raised for new conquests: and at length Chairolas was no longer called the Great, but the Tyrant.

CHAPTER XIII.

As Chairolas advanced in years, he left off wearing the false swan's down and the false pigeon's feather: he had long ceased to lock up his eagle-plume—he carried it constantly in his helmet, that it might whisper with ease into his ear. He had ceased to be popular with any class the moment he abandoned the presents of the baboon. By degrees a report spread through the nation that the king was befriended by an evil spirit; and that the eagle's plume was a talisman, which secured to the possessor —while it rendered him grasping, cruel, and

avaricious—prosperity, power, and fame. A conspiracy was formed to rob the king of his life and talisman at once. At the head of the conspiracy was the king's heir, Belmanes. They took their measures so well that they succeeded in seizing the palace—they penetrated into the chamber of the Great Chairolas—they paused at the threshhold on hearing his voice: he was addressing the fatal talisman.

"The ordeal," he said, "through which I passed, robbed me of my companions; but no ordeal could rob me of thee. I rule my people with a rod of iron—I have spread my conquests to the farthest regions to which the banner of Paida was ever wafted—I am still dissatisfied; what more can I desire?"—

"Death!" cried the conspirators, and the king fell, pierced to the heart. Belmanes seized the eagle's plume—it crumbled into dust in his grasp.

After the death of Chairolas the following sentences were written in gold letters before the gates of the great Academy of Paida, by a priest who pretended to be inspired:—

"The ridicule of common men aspires to be the leveller of genius.

"To renounce a virtue because it has made thee suffer from fraud, is to play the robber to thyself.

"Wouldst thou imitate the properties of the swan and the pigeon, borrow from the fox and the vulture: but no man can wear the imitations all his life; when he abandons them he is undone.

"If thou hast three virtues and thou losest two, the third by itself may become a vice.

"There is no blessing to the world like ambition joined to sympathy and benevolence: no scourge to the world like ambition divorced from them.

"The choicest gifts of the most benevolent genii are impotent, unless accompanied by a charm against experience.

"The charm against experience is woven by two Spirits—Patience and Self-esteem."

On these sentences nine sects of philosophy were founded: each sect construed them differently, each produced ten thousand volumes in support of its interpretation;—and no man was ever made wiser or better by the sects, the sentences, or the volumes!

THE CONSEL'S DAUGHTER.

BY THE AUTHOR OF "VIVIAN GRAY."

I.

At one of the most beautiful ports in the Mediterranean, Major Ponsonby held the office of British consul. The parliamentary interest of the noble family with which he was connected had obtained for him this office after serving his country, with no slight distinction during the glorious war of the Peninsula. Major Ponsonby was a widower, and his family consisted of an only daughter, Henrietta, who was a child of very tender years when he first obtained his appointment, but who had completed her eighteeenth year at the period, memorable in her life, which these pages attempt to commemorate. A girl of singular beauty was Henrietta Ponsonby, but not merely remarkable for her beauty. Her father, a very accomplished gentleman, had himself superintended her education with equal care and interest. In their beautiful solitude, for they enjoyed the advantage of very little society save that of those passing travellers who occasionally claimed his protection and hospitality, the chief and certainly the most engaging pursuit of Major Ponsonby, had been to assist the de-

velopment of the lively talents of his daughter, and to watch with delight, not unattended with anxiety, the formation of her ardent and imaginative character: he had himself imparted to her a skilful practice in those fine arts in which he himself excelled, and a knowledge of those exquisite languages which he himself not only spoke with facility, but with whose rich and interesting literature he was intimately acquainted. He was careful, also, that, although almost an alien from her native country, she should not be ignorant of the progress of its mind; and no inconsiderable portion of his income had of late years been expended in importing from England the productions of those eminent writers of which we are justly as proud as of the heroes under whose flag he had himself conquered in Portugal and Spain.

The progress of the daughter amply repaid the father for his care, and rewarded him for his solicitude: from the fond child of his affections she had become the cherished companion of his society; her lively fancy and agreeable conversation prevented solitude from degenerating into loneliness: she diffused over their happy home that indefinable charm, that spell of unceasing, yet soothing excitement, with which the constant presence of an amiable, a lovely, and accomplished woman can alone imbue existence; without which life, indeed, under any circumstances, is very dreary; and with which life, indeed, under any circumstances, is never desperate.

There were moments, perhaps, when Major Ponsonby, who was not altogether inexperienced in the

great world, might sigh, that one so eminently qualified as his daughter to shine even amid its splendour, should be destined to a career so obscure as that which necessarily attended the daughter of a consul in a distant country. It sometimes cost the father's heart a pang that his fair and fragrant flower should blush unseen, and waste its perfume even in their lovely wilderness; and then, with all a father's pride, and under all the influence of that worldly ambition from which men are never free, he would form plans by which she might visit, and visit with advantage, her native country. All the noble cousins were thought over, under whose distinguished patronage she might enter that great and distant world she was so capable of adorning; and more than once he had endeavoured to intimate to Henrietta that it might be better for them both that they should for a season part: but the consul's daughter shrunk from these whispers as some beautiful tree from the murmurs of a rising storm. She could not conceive existence without her father —the father under whose breath and sight she had ever lived and flourished—the father to whom she was indebted, not only for existence, but all the attributes that made life so pleasant; her sire, her tutor, her constant company, her dear, dear friend. To part from him, even though but for a season, and to gain splendour, appeared to her pure, yet lively imagination, the most fatal of fortunes; a terrible destiny—an awful dispensation. They had never parted, scarcely for an hour: once, indeed, he had been absent for three days; he had sailed with the

fleet on public business to a neighbouring port; he had been obliged to leave his daughter, and the daughter remembered those terrible three days like a frightful dream, the recollection of which made her shudder.

Major Ponsonby had inherited no patrimony—he possessed only the small income derived from his office, and a slender pension, which rewarded many wounds; but, in the pleasant place in which their lot was cast, these moderate means obtained for them not merely the necessaries, but all the luxuries of life. They inhabited in the town a palace worthy of the high, though extinct nobility, whose portraits and statues lined their lofty saloons, and filled their long corridors and graceful galleries; and about three miles from the town, on a gentle ascent facing the ocean, and embowered in groves of orange and olive trees, the fanciful garden enclosed in a thick wall of Indian fig and blooming aloes, was a most delicate casino, rented at a rate for which a garret may not be hired in England; but, indeed, a paradise. Of this pavilion Miss Ponsonby was the mistress; and here she lived amid fruit and flowers, surrounded by her birds: and here she might be often seen at sunset glancing amid its beauties, with an eye as brilliant, and a step as airy, as the bright gazelle that ever glided or bounded at her side.

II.

One summer day, when every body was asleep in the little sultry city where Major Ponsonby, even in his siesta, watched over the interests of British commerce—for it was a city, and was blessed with the holy presence of a bishop—a young Englishman disembarked from an imperial merchant brig just arrived from Otranto, and according to custom, took his way to the consul's house. He was a man of an age apparently verging towards thirty; and, although the native porter, who bore his luggage and directed his path, proved that, as he was accompanied not even by a single servant, he did not share the general reputation of his countrymen for wealth, his appearance to those practised in society was not undistinguished. Tall, slender, and calm, his air, though unaffected, was that of a man not deficient in self-confidence; and whether it were the art of his tailor, or the result of his own good frame, his garb, although remarkably plain, had that indefinable style which we associate with the costume of a man of some mark and breeding.

On arriving at the consul's house he was ushered through a large, dark, cool hall, at the end of which was a magnificent staircase leading to the suite of saloons, into a small apartment on the ground-floor

fitted up in the English style; and which, although it offered the appearance of the library of an English gentleman, was, in fact, the consular office. Dwarf book-cases encircled the room, occasionally crowned by a marble bust, or bronze group. The ample table was covered with papers, and a vacant easy-chair was evidently the consular throne. A portrait of his Britannic majesty figured on the walls of one part of the chamber; and over the mantel was another portrait, which immediately engaged the attention of the traveller, and, indeed, monopolized his observation. He had a very ample opportunity of studying it, for nearly a quarter of an hour elapsed before he was disturbed. It was the full-length portrait of a young lady. She stood on a terrace in a garden, and by her side was a gazelle. Her form was of wonderful symmetry; but although her dress was not English, the expression of her countenance reminded the traveller of the beauties of his native land. The dazzling complexion, the large deep blue eye, the high white forehead, the clustering brown hair, were all northern, but northern of the highest order. She held in her small hand a branch of orange-blossom—the hand was fairer than the flower.

"Signor Ferrers, I believe," said a shrill voice. The traveller started, and turned round. Before him stood a little parched-up, grinning, bowing Italian, holding in his hand the card that the traveller had sent up to the consul.

"My name is Ferrers," replied the traveller, slightly bowing, and speaking in a low, sweet tone.

"Signor Ponsonby is at the casino," said the Italian: "I have the honour to be the chancellor of the British consulate."

It is singular that a mercantile agent should be styled a consul, and his chief clerk a chancellor.

"I have the honour to be the chancellor of the British consulate," said the Italian; "and I will take the earliest opportunity of informing the consul of your arrival. From Otranto, I believe? All well, I hope, at Otranto?"

"I hope so too," replied the traveller; "and so I believe."

"You will be pleased to leave your passport, sir, with me—the consul will be most happy to see you at the casino: about sunset he will be very happy to see you at the casino. I am sorry that I detained you for a moment, but I was at my siesta. I will take the earliest opportunity of informing the consul of your arrival; but at present all the consular messengers are taking their siesta; the moment one is awake I shall send him to the casino. May I take the liberty of inquiring whether you have any letters for the consul?"

"None," replied the traveller.

The chancellor shrugged his shoulders a little, as if he regretted he had been roused from his siesta for a traveller who had not even a letter of introduction, and then turned on his heel to depart.

The traveller took up his hat, hesitated a moment, and then said, "Pray may I inquire of whom this is a portrait?"

"Certainly," replied the chancellor; "'tis the Signora Ponsonby."

III.

It was even upon as ignoble an animal as a Barbary ass, goaded by a dusky little islander almost in a state of nudity, that, an hour before sunset on the day of his arrival, the English traveller approached the casino of the consul's daughter, for there a note from Major Ponsonby had invited him to repair, to be introduced to his daughter, and to taste his oranges. The servant who received him led Mr. Ferrers to a very fine plane-tree, under whose spreading branches was arranged a banquet of fruit and flowers, coffee in cups of oriental filigree, and wines of the Levant, cooled in snow. The worthy consul was smoking his chibouque, and his daughter, as she rose to greet their guest, let her guitar fall upon the turf.

The original of the portrait proved that the painter had no need to flatter; and the dignified, yet cordial manner, the radiant smile, and the sweet and thrilling voice with which she welcomed her countryman, would have completed the spell, had, indeed, the wanderer been one prepared, or capable of being enchanted. As it was, Mr. Ferrers, while he returned his welcome with becoming complaisance, exhibited the breeding of a man accustomed to sights of strangeness and of beauty; and, while he expressed his

sense of the courtesy of his companions, admired their garden, and extolled the loveliness of the prospect, he did not depart for a moment from that subdued, and even sedate manner, which indicates the individual whom the world has little left to astonish, and less to enrapture, although, perhaps, much to please. Yet he was fluent in conversation, sensible and polished, and very agreeable. It appeared that he had travelled much, though he was far from boasting of his exploits. He had been long absent from England, had visited Egypt and Arabia, and had sojourned at Damascus. While he refused the pipe, he proved, by his observations on its use, that he was learned in its practice; and he declined his host's offer of a file of English journals, as he was not interested in their contents. His host was too polished to originate any inquiry which might throw light upon the connexions or quality of his guest, and his guest imitated his example. Nothing could be more perfectly well-bred than his whole demeanour—he listened to the major with deference, and he never paid Miss Ponsonby a single compliment: he never even asked her to sing; but the fond father did not omit this attention. Henrietta, in the most unaffected manner, complied with his request, because, as she was in the habit of singing every evening to her father, she saw no reason why he should, on this occasion, be deprived of an amusement to which he was accustomed. As the welcome seabreeze rose and stirred the flowers and branches, her

voice blended with its fresh and fragrant breath. It was a beautiful voice; and the wild and plaintive air in which she indulged, indigenous to their isle, harmonized alike with the picturesque scene and the serene hour. Mr. Ferrers listened with attention, and thanked her for her courtesy. Before they withdrew to the casino he even requested the favour of her repeating the gratification, but in so quiet a manner that most young ladies would have neglected to comply with a wish expressed with so little fervour.

The principal chamber of the casino was adorned with drawings by the consul's daughter: they depicted the surrounding scenery, and were executed by the hand of a master. Mr. Ferrers examined them with interest—his observations proved his knowledge, and made them more than suspect his skill. He admitted that he had some slight practice in the fine arts, and offered to lend his portfolio to Miss Ponsonby, if she thought it would amuse her. Upon the subject of scenery he spoke with more animation than on any other topic: his conversation, indeed, teemed with the observations of a fine eye and cultivated taste.

At length he departed, leaving behind him a very favourable impression. Henrietta and her father agreed that he was a most gentlemanlike personage—that he was very clever and very agreeable; and they were glad to know him. The major detailed all the families and all the persons of the name of

Ferrers of whom he had ever heard, and with whom he had been acquainted; and, before he slept, wondered, for the fiftieth time, "What Ferrers he was?"

IV.

The next morning, Mr. Ferrers sent his portfolio to Miss Ponsonby, to the consul's house, in the city; and her father called upon him immediately afterwards, to return his original visit, and to request him to dine with them. Mr. Ferrers declined the invitation; but begged to be permitted to pay his respects again at the casino, in the evening. The major, under the circumstances, ventured to press his new acquaintance to comply with their desire; but Mr. Ferrers became immediately very reserved, and the consul desisted.

Towards sunset, however, mounted on his Barbary ass, Mr. Ferrers again appeared at the gate of the casino, as mild and agreeable as before. They drank their coffee and ate their fruit, chatted and sang, and again repaired to the pavilion. Here they examined the contents of the portfolio:—they were very rich; for it contained drawings of all kinds, and almost of every celebrated place in the vicinity of the Mediterranean shores: Saracenic palaces, Egyptian temples, mosques of Damascus, and fountains of Stamboul. Here was a Bedouin encampment, shaded by a grove of palms; and there a Spanish Signorita,

shrouded in her mantille, glided along the Alameda. There was one circumstance, however, about these drawings, which struck Miss Ponsonby as at least remarkable. It was obvious that some pencil-mark in the corner of each drawing, in all probability containing the name and initials of the artist, had been carefully obliterated.

Among the drawings were several sketches of a yacht, which Mr. Ferrers passed over quickly, and without notice. The consul, however, who was an honorary member of the yacht club, and interested in every vessel of the squadron that visited the Mediterranean, very naturally inquired of Mr. Ferrers, to whom the schooner in question belonged. Mr. Ferrers seemed rather confused; but at length he said: "Oh, they are stupid things: I did not know they were here. The yacht is a yacht of a friend of mine, who was at Cadiz."

"Oh, I see the name," said the major: "'THE KRAKEN.' Why, that is Lord Bohun's yacht!"

"The same," said Mr. Ferrers; but perfectly composed.

"Ah! do you know Lord Bohun?" said Miss Ponsonby. "We have often expected him here.—I wonder he has never paid us a visit, papa. They say he is the most eccentric person in the world. Is he so?"

"I never heard much in his favour," said Mr. Ferrers. "I believe he has made himself a great fool, as most young nobles do."

"Well, I have heard very extraordinary things of him," said the consul. "He is a great traveller, at all events, which I think a circumstance in every man's favour."

"And then he has been a Guerilla chieftain," said Miss Ponsonby; "and a Bedouin robber; and—I hardly know what else: but Colonel Garth, who was here last summer, told us the most miraculous tales of his lordship."

"Affectations!" said Mr. Ferrers, with a sneer. "Bohun, however, has some excuses for his folly; for he was an orphan, I believe, in his cradle."

"Is he clever?" inquired Miss Ponsonby.

"Colonel Garth is a much better judge than I am," replied Mr. Ferrers. "I confess I have no taste for Guerilla chieftains, or Bedouin robbers. I am not at all romantic."

And here he attracted her attention to what he called an attempt at a bull-fight; and the conversation dropped, and Lord Bohun was forgotten.

A fortnight passed away, and Mr. Ferrers was still a visitant of our Mediterranean isle. His intimacy with the consul and his daughter remained on the same footing. Every evening he paid them a visit; and every evening, when he had retired, the major and his daughter agreed that he was a most agreeable person, though rather odd: the worthy consul always adding his regret that he would not dine with him, and his wonder as to what Ferrers he was.

Now, it so happened that it was a royal birth-day; and the bishop, and several of the leading persons of the town, had agreed to partake of the hospitality of the British consul. The major was anxious that Mr. Ferrers should meet them. He discussed this important point with his daughter.

"My darling, I don't like to ask him: he really is such a very odd man. The moment you ask him to dinner, he looks as if you had offered him an insult. Shall we send him a formal invitation? I wonder what Ferrers he is? I should be gratified if he would dine with us. Besides, he would see something of our native society here, which is amusing. What shall we do?"

"I will ask him," replied Miss Ponsonby. "I don't think he could refuse me."

"I am sure I could not," replied the major, smiling.

And so Miss Ponsonby seized an opportunity of telling Mr. Ferrers that she had a favour to ask of him. He was more fortunate than he imagined, was his courteous reply.

"Then you must dine with papa, to-morrow."

Mr. Ferrers' brow immediately clouded.

"Now, do not look so suspicious," said Miss Ponsonby. "Do you think that ours is an Italian banquet? Is there poison in the dish? Or do you live only on fruit and flowers?" continued Miss Ponsonby. "Do you know," she added, with an arch smile, "I think you must be a ghoul."

A sort of smile struggled with a scowl over the haughty countenance of the Englishman.

"You will come!" said Miss Ponsonby, most winningly.

"I have already trespassed too much upon Major Ponsonby's hospitality," muttered Mr. Ferrers; "I have no claim to it."

"You are our countryman."

"Unknown."

"The common consequence of being a traveller."

"Yes—but—in short—I——"

"You must come," said Miss Ponsonby, with a glance like sunshine.

"You do with me what you like," exclaimed Mr. Ferrers, with animation. "Beautiful—weather," he concluded.

Mr. Ferrers was therefore their guest; and strange it is to say, that, from this day, from some cause, which it is now useless to ascertain, this gentleman became an habitual guest at the consul's table; accepting a general invitation without even a frown; and, what is more remarkable, availing himself of it, scarcely with an exception.

Could it be the consul's daughter that effected this revolution? Time may, perhaps, solve this interesting problem. Certainly, whether it were that she was seldom seen to more advantage than when presiding over society; or whether, elate with her triumph, she was particularly pleasing, because she was particularly pleased; certainly Henrietta Pon-

sonby never appeared to greater advantage than she did upon the day of this memorable festival. Mr. Ferrers, when he quitted the house, sauntered to the mole, and gazed upon the moonlight sea.—A dangerous symptom. Yet the eye of Mr. Ferrers had before this been fixed in mute abstraction on many a summer wave, when Dian was in her bower; and this man, cold and inscrutable as he seemed, was learned in woman, and woman's ways. Shall a consul's daughter melt a heart that boasted of being callous, and clear a brow that prided itself upon its clouds?

But if the state of Mr. Ferrers' heart were doubtful, I must perforce confess, that, as time drew on, Henrietta Ponsonby, if she had ventured to inquire, could have little hesitated as to the state of her own feelings. Her companion, her constant companion, for such Mr. Ferrers had now insensibly become, exercised over her an influence, of the power of which she was unconscious,—only because it was unceasing. Had for a moment the excitement of her novel feelings ceased, she would have discovered, with wonder, perhaps with some degree of fear, how changed she had become since the first evening he approached their pleasant casino. And yet Mr. Ferrers was not her lover. No act,—no word of gallantry,—no indication of affection, to her inexperienced sense, ever escaped him. All that he did was, that he sought her society; but, then, there was no other. The only wonder was, that he should remain among them; but, then, he had

been every where. The vague love of lounging and repose, which ever and anon falls upon men long accustomed to singular activity and strange adventure, sufficiently accounted for his conduct. But, whatever might be his motives, certain it is, that the English stranger dangerously interested the feelings of the consul's daughter; and when she thought the time must arrive for his departure, she drove the recollection from her mind with a swiftness which indicated the pang which she experienced by its occurrence. And no marvel either, that the heart of this young and lovely maiden softened at the thought, and in the presence of her companion: no marvel; and no shame; for nature had invested the Englishman with soul-subduing qualities. His elegant person; his tender, yet reserved manners; his experienced, yet ornate mind; the flashes of a brilliant, yet mellowed imagination, which ever and anon would break forth in his conversation: perhaps, too, the air of melancholy, and even of mystery, which enveloped him, were all spells potent in the charm that enchants the heart of woman. And the major, what did he think? The good consul was puzzled. The confirmed intimacy between his daughter and his guest alike perplexed and pleased him. He certainly never had become acquainted with a man whom he would sooner have preferred for a son-in-law, if he had only known who he was. But two months, and more than two months, had elapsed, and threw no light upon this most necessary point of knowledge. The consul hesitated as to his conduct.

His anxiety almost mastered his good-breeding.—Now he thought of speaking to Mr. Ferrers, and then to his daughter. There were objections to each line of conduct: and his confidence in Mr. Ferrers was very great, although he did not exactly know who he was: he was decidedly a gentleman; and there was, throughout his conduct and conversation, a tone of such strict propriety; there was so much delicacy, and good feeling, and sound principle, in all he said and did; that the consul at length resolved, that he had no right to suspect, and no authority to question him. He was just on the point, however, of conferring with his daughter, when the town was suddenly enlivened, and his attention suddenly engrossed, by the arrival of two other English gentlemen.

V.

It must be confessed that Captain Ormsby and Major M'Intyre were two very different sort of men to Mr. Ferrers. Never were two such gay, noisy, pleasant, commonplace, persons. They were "*on leave*" from one of the Mediterranean garrisons, had scampered through Italy, shot red-legged partridges all along the Barbary coast, and even smoked a pipe with the Dey of Algiers. They were intoxicated with all the sights they had seen, and all the scrapes which they had encountered; and which they styled "regular adventures:" and they insisted upon giving every one a description of what

every body had heard or seen. In consequence of their arrival, Mr. Ferrers discontinued dining with his accustomed host; and resumed his old habit of riding up to the casino, every evening, on his Barbary ass, to eat oranges, and talk to the consul's daughter.

"I suppose you know Florence, Mr. Ferrers?" said Major M'Intyre.

Mr. Ferrers bowed.

"St. Peter's, of course, you have seen?" said Captain Ormsby.

"But have you seen it during Holy Week?" said the major. "That's the thing."

"Ah, I see you have been every where," said the captain: "Algiers, of course?"

"I never was at Algiers," replied Mr. Ferrers, quite rejoiced at the circumstance; and he walked away, and played with the gazelle.

"By Jove," said the major, with elevated eyes, "not been at Algiers! why, Mr. Consul, I thought you said Mr. Ferrers was a very great traveller indeed; and he has not been at Algiers! I consider Algiers more worth seeing than any place we ever visited. Don't you, Ormsby?"

The consul inquired whether he had met any compatriots at that famous place. The military travellers answered, that they had not; but that Lord Bohun's yacht was there; and they understood his lordship was about to proceed to this island. The conversation for some time then dwelt upon Lord Bohun, and his adventures, eccentricities, and wealth. But Cap-

tain Ormsby finally pronounced "Bohun a devilish good fellow."

"Do you know Lord Bohun?" inquired Mr. Ferrers.

"Why, no! confessed Captain Ormsby: "but he is a devilish intimate friend of a devilish intimate friend of mine."

Mr. Ferrers made a sign to Miss Ponsonby; she rose, and followed him into the garden. "I cannot endure the jabber of these men," said Mr. Ferrers.

"They are very good-natured," said Miss Ponsonby.

"It may be so; and I have no right to criticise them. I dare say they think me very dull. However, it appears you will have Lord Bohun here in a short time, and then I shall be forgotten."

"That is not a very kind speech. You would not be forgotten, even if absent; and you have, I hope, no thought of quitting us.

"I have remained here too long. Besides, I have no wish to play a second part to Lord Bohun."

"Who thinks of Lord Bohun? and why should you play a second part to any one? You are a little perverse, Mr. Ferrers."

"I have been in this island ten weeks," said Mr. Ferrers, thoughtfully.

"When we begin to count time, we are generally weary," said Miss Ponsonby.

"You are in error, I would willingly compound, that the rest of my existence should be as happy as the last ten weeks. They have been very happy."

said Mr. Ferrers, musingly; "very happy, indeed. The only *happy* time I ever knew. They have been so serene, and so sweet."

"And why not remain, then?" said Miss Ponsonby, in a low voice.

"There are many reasons," said Mr. Ferrers: and he offered his arm to Miss Ponsonby, and they walked together, far away from the casino. "These ten weeks have been so serene, and so sweet," he continued, but in a calm voice, "because you have been my companion. My life has taken its colour from your character. Now, listen to me, dearest Miss Ponsonby, and be not alarmed. I love you!"

Her arm trembled in his.

"Yes, I *love* you; and, believe me, I use that word with no common feeling. It describes the entire devotion of my existence to your life; and my complete sympathy with every attribute of your nature. Calm as may be my speech, I love you with a burning heart."

She bowed her head and covered her face *with* her right hand.

"Most beauteous lady," continued Mr. Ferrers, "pardon me if I agitate you; for my respect is equal to my love. I stand before you a stranger, utterly unknown; and I am so circumstanced, that it is not in my power, even at *this* moment, to offer any explanation of my equivocal position. Yet, whatever I may be, I offer my existence, and all its accidents, good or bad, in homage to your heart. May I indulge the delicious hope that, if not now accepted,

they are at least considered with kindliness, and without suspicion?"

"Oh, yes! without *suspicion,*" murmured Miss Ponsonby—"without suspicion. "Nothing, nothing in the world shall ever make me believe that you are not as good as you are——gifted."

"Darling Henrietta!" exclaimed Mr. Ferrers, in a voice of melting tenderness; and he pressed her to his heart, and sealed his love upon her lips. "This, this is confidence; this, this is the woman's love I long have sighed for. Doubt me not, dearest; never doubt me! Say you are mine; once more pledge yourself to me. I leave our isle this night. Nay, start not, sweet one! 'Tis for our happiness; this night. I shall return to claim my bride. Now, listen darling! our engagement, our sweet and solemn engagement, is secret. You will never hear from me until we meet again; you may hear *of* me, and not to my advantage. What matter? You love me; you cannot doubt me. I leave with you my honour: an honour *never sullied.* Mind that—Oh no, you cannot doubt me!"

"I am yours: I care not what they say: if there be no faith and truth in you, I will despair of them for ever."

"Beautiful being! You make me mad with joy. Has fate reserved for me, indeed, this treasure! Am I at length loved, and loved only for myself!"

VI.

He has gone; Mr. Ferrers has departed. What an event! What a marvellous event! A revolution had occurred in the life of Henrietta Ponsonby: she was no longer her own mistress; she was no longer her father's child. She belonged to another; and that other a stranger, an unknown, and departed being! How strange! And yet how sweet! This beautiful young lady passed her days in pondering over her singular position. In vain she attempted to struggle with her destiny. In vain she depicted to herself the error, perhaps the madness, of her conduct. She was fascinated. She could not reason; she could not communicate to her father all that had happened. A thousand times her lips moved to reveal her secret; a thousand times an irresistible power restrained them. She remained silent, moody, and restless: she plucked flowers, and threw them to the wind: she gazed upon the sea, and watched the birds in abstraction wilder than their wing: and yet she would not doubt her betrothed. That voice, so sweet, and solemn, and so sincere, still lingered in her ear: the gaze of that pure and lofty brow was engraven on her memory: never could she forget those delicate adieus!

This change in his daughter was not unmarked by the consul, who, after some reflection, could not hesitate in considering it as the result of the departure of

Mr. Ferrers. The thought made him mournful. It pained his noble nature, that the guest whom he so respected might have trifled with the affections of the child whom he so loved. He spoke to the maiden; but the maiden said she was happy. And, indeed, her conduct gave evidence of restlessness rather than misery; for her heart seemed sometimes exuberantly gay; often did she smile, and ever did she sing. The consul was conscious there was a mystery he could not fathom. It is bitter for a father at all times to feel that his child is unhappy; but doubly bitter is the pang when he feels that the cause is secret.

Three months, three heavy months passed away, and the cloud still rested on this once happy home. Suddenly Lord Bohun arrived, the much talked-of Lord Bohun, in his more talked-of yacht. The bustle which the arrival of this celebrated personage occasioned in the consular establishment was a diversion from the reserve, or the gloom, which had so long prevailed there. Lord Bohun was a young, agreeable, and somewhat affected individual. He had a German chasseur and a Greek page. He was very luxurious, and rather troublesome; but infinitely amusing, both to the consul and his daughter. He dined with them every day, and recounted his extraordinary adventures with considerable self-complacency. In the course of the week he scampered over every part of the island; and gave a magnificent entertainment on board the Kraken, to the bishop and the principal islanders, in honour of the consul's daughter. Indeed it was soon very evident that his lordship entertained

feelings of no ordinary admiration for his hostess. He paid her on all occasions the most marked attention; and the consul, who did not for a moment believe that these attentions indicated other than the transient feelings that became a lord, and so adventurous a lord, began to fear that his inexperienced Henrietta might again become the victim of the fugitive admiration of a traveller.

One evening at the casino, his lordship noticed a drawing of his own yacht, and started. The consul explained to him, that the drawing had been copied by his daughter from a sketch by an English traveller, who preceded him. His name was inquired, and given.

"Ferrers!" exclaimed his lordship. "What, has Ferrers been here?"

"You know Mr. Ferrers, then?" inquired Henrietta, with suppressed agitation.

"Oh yes, I know Ferrers."

"A most agreeable and gentleman-like man," said the consul, anxious, he knew not why, that the conversation would cease.

"Oh yes, Ferrers is a very agreeable man. He piques himself on being agreeable,—Mr. Ferrers."

"From what I have observed of Mr. Ferrers," said Henrietta, in a firm, and rather decided tone, "I should not have given him credit for any sentiment approaching to *conceit*."

"He is fortunate in having such a defender," said his lordship, bowing gallantly.

"Our friends are scarcely worth possessing," said

Miss Ponsonby, "unless they defend us when absent. But I am not aware that Mr. Ferrers needs any defence."

His lordship turned on his heel, and hummed an opera air.

"Mr. Ferrers paid us a long visit," said the consul, who was now desirous that the conversation should proceed.

"He had evidently a great inducement," said Lord Bohun. "I wonder he ever departed."

"He is a great favourite in this house," said Miss Ponsonby.

"I perceive it," said Lord Bohun.

"What Ferrers is he?" inquired the consul.

"Oh, he has gentle blood in his veins," said Lord Bohun. "I never heard his breeding impeached."

"And I should think, nothing else," said Miss Ponsonby.

"Oh, I never heard any thing particular against Ferrers," said his lordship; "except that he was a roué; and a little mad. That is all."

"Enough, I should think," said Major Ponsonby, with a clouded brow.

"What a roué may be, I can scarcely be supposed to judge," said Henrietta. "If, however, it be a man remarkable for the delicacy of his thoughts and conduct, Mr. Ferrers has certainly some claim to the title. As for his madness, he was our constant companion for nearly three months: if he be mad, it must be a very *little* indeed."

"He was a great favourite of Henrietta," said her father, with a forced smile.

"Fortunate man!" said the lord. "Fortunate Ferrers!"

Lord Bohun stepped into the garden with the consul: Miss Ponsonby was left alone. Firm as had been her previous demeanour, now, that she was alone, her agitated countenance denoted the tumult of her mind. A roué! Could it be so! Could it be possible! Was she, while she had pledged the freshness of her virgin mind to this unknown man; was she, after all, only a fresh sacrifice to his insatiable vanity! Ferrers a roué! That lofty-minded man, who spoke so eloquently, and so wisely, was he a roué, an eccentric roué; one whose unprincipled conduct could only be excused at the expense of the soundness of his intellect? She could not credit it; she would not credit it: and yet his conduct had been so strange, so mysterious, so unnecessarily mysterious: and then she reccollected his last dark-muttered words. "*You may hear of me, and not to my advantage.*" Oh, what a prophecy! And *from* him she had never heard. He had, at least, kept this sad promise. Very sorrowful was the consul's daughter. And then she bethought herself of his pledge, and his honour that had been *never sullied.* She buried her face in her hands,—she conjured up to her recollection all that had happened since his arrival, perhaps his fatal arrival, in their island; all he had said, and done, and seemed to think. She would not doubt him. It was madness for a moment to doubt him. No desolation seemed so complete, no misery

so full of anguish, as such suspicion: she could not doubt him: all her happiness was hope. A gentle touch roused her. It was her gazelle; the gazelle that he had so loved. She caressed it, she caressed it for his sake: she arose and joined her father and Lord Bohun in the garden, if not light-hearted, at least serene.

VII.

There must have been something peculiarly captivating in the air of our Island; for Lord Bohun, who, according to his own account, had never remained in any place a week in the whole course of his life, exhibited no inclination to quit the city where Major Ponsonby presided over the interests of our commerce. He had remained there nearly a month, made himself very agreeable, and, on the whole, was a welcome guest, certainly with the consul, if not with the consul's daughter. As for the name of Mr. Ferrers, it occasionally occurred in conversation. Henrietta piqued herself upon the unsuspected inquiries which she carried on respecting her absent friend. She, however, did not succeed in eliciting much information. Lord Bohun was so vague, that it was impossible to annex a precise idea to any thing he ever uttered. Whether Ferrers were rich or poor, really of good family, or, as she sometimes thought, of disgraceful lineage; when and where Lord Bohun

and himself had been fellow-travellers—all was alike obscure and shadowy. Not that her noble guest was inattentive to her inquiries; on the contrary, he almost annoyed her by his constant devotion: she was almost, indeed, inclined to resent his singularly marked expressions of admiration as an insult; when, to her utter astonishment, one morning her father astounded her by an announcement that Lord Bohun had done her the honour of offering her his hand and heart. The beautiful Henrietta was in great perplexity. It was due to Lord Bohun to reject his flattering proposal without reservation: it was difficult, almost impossible, to convince her father of the expediency of such a proceeding. There was in the proposal of Lord Bohun every circumstance which could gratify Major Ponsonby. In the wildest dreams of his paternal ambition, his hopes had never soared higher than the possession of such a son-in-law: high birth, high rank, splendid fortune, and accomplished youth, were combined in the individual whom some favouring destiny, it would seem, had wafted to this distant and obscure isle to offer his vows to its accomplished mistress. That his daughter might hesitate, on so brief an acquaintance, to unite her eternal lot in life with a comparative stranger, was what he had, in some degree, anticipated; but that she should unhesitatingly and unreservedly decline the proposal, was conduct for which he was totally unprepared. He was disappointed and mortified—for the first time in his life he was angry with his child. It is strange that Lord Bohun, who had required a deputy to make a proposition

which, of all others, the most becomes and most requires a principal, should, when his fate was decided, have requested a personal interview with Miss Ponsonby. It was a favour which she could not refuse, for her father required her to grant it. She accordingly prepared herself for a repetition of the proposal from lips, doubtless, unaccustomed to sue in vain. It was otherwise: never had Lord Bohun conducted himself in a more kind and unaffected manner than during this interview: it pained Miss Ponsonby to think she had pained one who was in reality so amiable: she was glad, however, to observe that he did not appear very much moved or annoyed. Lord Bohun expressed his gratitude for the agreeable hours he had spent in her society; and then most delicately ventured to inquire whether time might, perhaps, influence Miss Ponsonby's determination? And when he had received her most courteous, though hopeless answer, he only expressed his wishes for her future happiness, which he could not doubt.

"I feel," said Lord Bohun, as he was about to depart; "I feel," he said, in a very hesitating voice, "I am taking a great, and unwarrantable liberty; but believe me, dear Miss Ponsonby, the inquiry, if I could venture to make it, is inspired by the sincerest desire for your welfare."

"Speak with freedom, Lord Bohun; you will ever, I am sure, speak with kindness."

"I would not willingly despair then, unless I believed that heart were engaged to another."

Miss Ponsonby bent down and plucked a flower,

and, her brow covered with blushes, with an agitated hand tore the flower to pieces.

"Is this a fair inquiry?" she murmured.

"It is for your sake I inquire," answered Lord Bohun.

Now an irresistible conviction came over her mind that Lord Bohun was thinking of Ferrers, and a desire on her part as strong to learn at length something of her mysterious lover.

"What, indeed, if I be not mistress of my heart?" She spoke without raising her head.

"In that case I will believe that it belongs to one worthy of such a treasure."

"You speak of Edwin Ferrers?" said Miss Ponsonby.

"The same."

"You know him?" she inquired, in a choking voice.

"I know and honour him. I have long believed that the world did not boast a man more gifted; now I know that it does not possess a *man more* blessed."

"Shall you see him?" she inquired, in a quick tone.

"Probably you will see him first: I am sufficiently acquainted with his movements to know that he will soon be here. This Greek boy whom you have sometimes noticed is his page: I wish him to join his master again; and methinks the readiest way will be to leave him in this isle. Here, Spiridion, bow to your new mistress, and be dutiful for her sake, as

well as that of your lord's—Adieu! dearest Miss Ponsonby!"

VIII.

This strange conversation with Lord Bohun at parting, was not without a certain wild, but not unpleasing influence over the mind of Henrietta Ponsonby. Much as it at first had agitated her, its result, as she often mused over it, was far from being without solace. It was consoling, indeed, to know that one person, at least, honoured that being in whom she had so implicitly relied: Lord Bohun, also, had before spoken of Ferrers in a very different tone; but she felt confidence in the unusual seriousness of his last communication; and with satisfaction contrasted it with the heedlessness, or the levity, of his former intimations. Here, too, was the page of Ferrers at her side—the beautiful and bright-eyed Spiridion. How strange it was! how very strange! Her simple life had suddenly become like some shifting fairy tale: but love, indeed, is a fairy, and full of marvels and magic—it changes all things; and the quietest domestic hearth, when shadowed by its wing, becomes as rife with wonders and adventure as if it were the passionate theatre of some old romance. Yes! the bright-eyed Greek page of her mysterious and absent lover was at her side—but then he only spoke Greek. In vain she tried to make him comprehend how much she de-

sired to have tidings of his master. The graceful mute could only indulge in airy pantomime, point to the skies and ocean, or press his hand to his heart in token of fidelity. Henrietta amused herself in teaching Spiridion Italian, and repaid herself for all her trouble in occasionally obtaining some slight information of her friend. In time she learned that Ferrers was in Italy, and had seen Lord Bohun before the departure of that nobleman. In answer to her anxious and often-repeated inquiries whether he would soon return, Spiridion was constant to his consoling affirmative. Never was such a sedulous mistress of languages as Henrietta Ponsonby. She learned, also, that an Albanian scarf, which the page wore round his waist, had been given him by his master when Spiridion quitted him; and Henrietta instantly obtained the scarf for a Barbary shawl of uncommon splendour.

Now it happened one afternoon towards sunset, as the Greek page rambling, as was his custom, over the neighbouring heights, beheld below the spreading fort, the neighbouring straits, and the distant sea, that a vessel appeared in sight, and soon entered the harbour. It was an English vessel—it was the yacht of Lord Bohun. The page started and watched the vessel with a fixed and earnest gaze: soon he observed the British consul in his boat row to the side of the vessel, and almost immediately return. At that moment the yacht hoisted a signal—upon a white ground a crimson heart—whereupon Spiridion, draw-

ing from his breast a letter, kissed it twice, and bounded away.

He bounded away towards the city, and scarcely slackened his pace until he arrived at the consul's mansion—he rushed in, dashed up the staircase, and entered the saloons. At the window of one, gazing on the sunset, was Henrietta Ponsonby—her gaze was serious, but her beautiful countenance was rather tinged by melancholy than touched by gloom—pensive, not sorrowful. By her side lay her guitar, still echoing, as it were, with her touch; and near it the Albanian scarf, on which she had embroidered the name of her beloved. Of him, then, were her gentle musings? Who can doubt it? Her gentle musings were of him whom she had loved with such unexampled trust. Fond, beautiful, confiding maiden! It was the strength of thy mind as much as the simplicity of thy heart that rendered thee so faithful and so firm! Who would not envy thy unknown adorer? Can he be false? Suspicion is for weak minds and cold-blooded spirits. Thou never didst doubt; and thou wast just, for, behold, he is true!

A fluttering sound roused her—she turned her head, and expected to see her gazelle: it was Spiridion; his face was wreathed with smiles as he held towards her a letter. She seized it—she recognised in an instant the hand-writing she had so often studied—it was his! Yes! it was his. It was the hand-writing of her beloved. Her face was pale, her hand

trembled; a cloud moved before her vision; yet at length she read, and she read these words:—

"If, as I hope, and as I believe, you are faithful to those vows, which, since my departure, have been my only consolation, you will meet me to-morrow, two hours before noon, in our garden. I come to claim my bride; but until my lips have expressed to you how much I adore you, let nothing be known to our father."

IX.

"My dearest Henrietta," said the consul, as he entered, "who, think you, has returned! Lord Bohun."

"Indeed!" said Henrietta. "Have you seen him?"

"No. I paid my respects to him immediately, but he was unwell. He breakfasts with us to-morrow, at ten."

The morrow came, but ten o'clock brought no Lord Bohun; and even eleven sounded: the consul sought his daughter, to consult her—he was surprised to learn that Miss Ponsonby had not returned from her early ramble. At this moment a messenger arrived from the yacht to say, that, from some error, Lord Bohun had repaired to the casino, where he awaited the consul. The major mounted his barb, and soon

reached the pavilion. As he entered the garden, he beheld, in the distance, his daughter and—Mr. Ferrers. He was, indeed, surprised. It appeared that Henrietta was about to run forward to him; but her companion checked her, and she disappeared down a neighbouring walk. Mr. Ferrers advanced, and saluted her father—

"You are surprised to see me, my dear sir?"

"I am surprised, but most happy. You came, of course, with Lord Bohun?"

Mr. Ferrers bowed.

"I am very desirous of having some conversation with you, my dear Major Ponsonby," continued Mr. Ferrers.

"I am ever at your service, my dear sir; but at the present moment I must go and greet his lordship."

"Oh, never mind Bohun," said Mr. Ferrers, carelessly. "I have no ceremony with him—he can wait."

The major was a little perplexed.

"You must know, my dearest sir," continued Mr. Ferrers, "that I wish to speak to you on a subject in which my happiness is entirely concerned."

"Proceed, sir," said the consul, looking still more puzzled.

"You can scarcely be astonished, my dearest sir, that I should admire your daughter."

The consul bowed.

"Indeed," said Mr. Ferrers, "it seems to me im-

possible to know her and not admire: I should say, adore her."

"You flatter a father's feelings," said the consul.

"I express my own," replied Mr. Ferrers. "I love her—I have long loved her, devotedly."

"Hem!" said Major Ponsonby.

"I feel," continued Mr. F., "that there is a great deal to apologize for in my conduct, both towards you and herself: I feel that my conduct may, in some degree, be considered even unpardonable: I will not say that the end justifies the means, Major Ponsonby, but my end was, at least, a great, and, I am sure, a virtuous one."

"I do not clearly comprehend you, Mr. Ferrers."

"It is some consolation to me," continued that gentleman, "that the daughter has pardoned me: now let me indulge the delightful hope that I may be as successful with the father."

"I will, at least, listen with patience to you, Mr. Ferrers; but I must own your meaning is not very evident to me: let me, at least, go and shake hands with Lord Bohun."

"I will answer for Lord Bohun excusing your momentary neglect. Pray, my dear sir, listen to me."

"I wish to make you acquainted, Major Ponsonby, with the feelings which influenced me when I first landed on this island. This knowledge is necessary for my justification."

"But what is there to justify?" inquired the major.

"Conceive a man born to a great fortune," conti-

nued Mr. F., without noticing the interruption, "and to some accidents of life, which many esteem above fortune; a station as eminent as his wealth—conceive this man master of his destiny from his boyhood, and early experienced in that great world with which you are not unacquainted—conceive him with a heart, gifted, perhaps, with too dangerous a sensibility; the dupe and the victim of all whom he encounters—conceive him, in disgust, flying from the world that had deceived him, and divesting himself of those accidents of existence which, however envied by others, appeared to his morbid imagination the essential causes of his misery—conceive this man, unknown and obscure, sighing to be valued for those qualities of which fortune could not deprive him, and to be loved only for his own sake—a miserable man, sir!"

"It would seem so," said the consul.

"Now, then, for a moment imagine this man apparently in possession of all for which he had so long panted; he is loved, he is loved for himself, and loved by a being surpassing the brightest dream of his purest youth: yet the remembrance of the past poisons, even now, his joy. He is haunted by the suspicion that the affection, even of this being, is less the result of his own qualities, than of her inexperience of life—he has every thing at stake—he dares to submit her devotion to the sharpest trial—he quits her without withdrawing the dark curtain with which he had enveloped himself—he quits her with the distinct understanding that she shall not even hear from him until he thinks fit to return; and entangles her pure

mind, for the first time, in a secret from the parent whom she adores. He is careful, in the mean while, that his name shall be traduced in her presence—that the proudest fortune, the loftiest rank, shall be offered for her acceptance, if she only will renounce him, and the dim hope of his return. A terrible trial, Major Ponsonby!"

"Indeed, most terrible."

"But she is true—truer even than truth—and I have come back to claim my unrivalled bride. Can you pardon me? Can you sympathize with me?"

"I speak then ——" murmured the astonished consul—

"To your son, with your permission—to Lord Bohun!"

POOR DUMMY!

AN IRISH SKETCH.

BY MRS. S. C. HALL.

"I was born so, mother."—BYRON.

In the small and picturesque village of Rathleen, on the banks of the wide, and beautiful, and luxuriant Shannon, is a small turf-built cottage, consisting of but one room; in which lived a poor industrious woman, distinguished in the parish, and out of the parish, by the *soubriquet* of "the *lone* widow."

This pathetic term, so expressive of extreme desolation, was bestowed upon the widow of a wild and fearless man, who would have paid upon the scaffold the penalty of sedition, had he not in prison terminated his existence by his own hand. His wife loved him with the zealous and devoted love which the weak feel for the strong. No idea of crime associated itself with "her Robin's" adventures. And, though she had never heard of "Roman virtue," she admired the same species of patriotism as it shone forth in her husband's devotion to a cause which he believed right, and sacrificed himself to support.

When Poor Dummy, the subject of my tale, was born—it was but a few weeks after her mother became a widow—she was a perfect and well-favoured child; and it was, indeed, one of the Almighty's especial blessings that "the lone widow's" attention to her beloved infant diverted the melancholy that rose in full power after her husband's loss. Even to the unconscious baby would she wail over the misfortune that had so heavily fallen upon both.

"They took yer father, a cushla! but I bless God they didn't lade him to a shameful death. Ay, smile, my heart's darlin', for there's no shame upon yer name—smile, my little jewel! and laugh at the small birds that are peepin' at ye through the bushes. Merry be ye'r soul, my blessin'; may the cross and the trouble be far from ye!—and sure the Almighty will be a double father to you. Oh! my heart's breakin',—yet, why for should I wash yer smiles in yer mother's tears?" and then "the lone widow" would lay her child upon the turf, and, turning her face to the thick bushes of hawthorn and elder that sheltered her little cottage-garden, weep many and bitter tears. Still her child beguiled her of her grief; and its beauty attracted the attention of more than one kind-hearted Irish lady, who prevented "the lone widow" from wanting any comforts, and furnished her little cottage with many rural luxuries. The child was more than two years old, when, one morning, the parish priest was disturbed sooner than he desired by "the lone widow."—"Mistress Fur-

long, sir, yer reverence,"—as his bare-legged servant announced her; and the poor woman, carrying her little girl in her arms, entered the parlour.

"It's sore throuble I've got at my heart on account of little Alice, yer honour, that's brought me here," she commenced, after many and elaborate courtesyings. "It's what some of the neighbours say, with all tenderness, God bless them!—that my child—yer reverence——"

"Well, my good woman? compose yourself—pray, go on."

"Is not altogether right—I'll spake the name presently, yer honour—only, somehow, it chokes me just here." And she paused for a moment, and laid her hand upon her throat.

"God will enable you to bear whatever he puts upon you, woman dear!" observed the kind-hearted man, pushing a chair towards his parishioner;—"may be, he may have thought fit to take the reason from her, and if so——"

"Oh, no, no, no!" exclaimed the agonized mother; "not that, not that, your honour—she has a load of sense for her years, indeed, though I say it; she is a rock of sense, if a body may tell so of their own flesh and blood: it is not that; but look, yer reverence, if I call her, she does not hear—and Anty Mallow has a babby, younger than mine by eleven weeks; Anty Mallow's babby can say, "Father," in its own way; but mine, sir,—mine——" she caught her child to her bosom with a violent effort, and laid her flushed

cheek upon its white and placid brow,—"mine, holy father, will be a '*dummy*' to its grave!"

The priest looked upon the poor woman with great compassion; he remembered what she had already suffered—he called to mind her strong and natural attachment—he thought of the love she bore her offspring, and how very frequently he had, with his neighbours, formed little plans for the beautiful child's advancement: how they had determined to make it "a good scholor," and how the young lady at the manor meditated on little Alice's improvement—he saw how the infant, with her little fingers, wiped away the tears that chased each other down the widow's cheek, as she sat looking with affection and despair into her child's face.

"She has been marked out for sorrow by the Almighty: I see that plain enough: though it's often in the night-time I put her from my bosom, that neither the sob nor the tear might rest upon her, so that she mightn't know the *sound* nor the *feel* of either—but it's no good. Your honour is a wise gentleman, and may be you could *insense* me if there is any way by which I could make her come to the knowledge that she had a father. Oh, my grief! how I have prayed that the time might pass, so that she would be able to say that one word—FATHER!"

The priest comforted her as he best could; and, above all, assured her that there was an institution where, when old enough, little Alice could be taught

to read and write. This information poured consolation upon her broken spirit: she returned to her hut, and applied herself diligently to her wheel and knitting. The earliest bird of summer sang before the rising of the sun, to cheer her industry; her dress was, like Jacob's coat, of many colours: and the neighbours, one and all, wondered what "the lone widow" meant to do with her money. "Sure, her child," they said, "would never need it, for Poor Dummy was the blossom of the whole country, and the gentry wouldn't see her want."

The mother, however, nourished a purpose and a plan in her own secret soul; and, when Alice was ten years old, prepared to put it into execution. This was to journey with her to Dublin, place her in the Deaf and Dumb Asylum for three or four years, and engage herself, if possible, as a nurse, within its walls. To this end were all her earnings devoted; with this object she toiled, denying herself all but potatoes and a ragged coat: and, when one looked into Alice's beautiful face, and knew the energy and activity that had sprung up and flourished in the widow's bosom, it was impossible not to feel the utmost respect for her resolve. Still her neighbours called her "the lone widow;" for, though her child understood almost every single, simple thing she signed to her, yet there was no voice—no sound, in the lonely cottage, except the mechanical hum of her industrious wheel, or the subdued pur of Alice's favourite cat; which, poor thing! appeared affected by the spirit of loneliness that pervaded the small household. The

day, however, arrived for the widow's departure:—she was furnished with letters from the neighbouring gentry; and in due time little Alice was received into the Asylum for the Deaf and Dumb. Her mother, of course, being perfectly unfitted for the situation she desired, supported herself with what she had saved, and what she continued to earn: and, after three years of mingled attention and carefulness on the part of Alice, and patient enduring on that of her mother, the latter was informed that her child could now write. Tremblingly did the affectionate parent watch the pen's traceary upon the paper, and direct her on a fair new sheet to write the word "*father;*" she then enclosed the specimen, and had it sent to her parish priest, with a message from herself, saying that *now* she would return to Rathleen. It appeared as if the poor woman's whole desire was that her child should be able to write that one word—"father!—and that desire accomplished, her heart yearned for the quiet of her little cottage, and the silent but expressive commune she now felt she could hold with her *lonely* child.

Yet Alice was not lonely—her mind was rich in the treasures of a bright and active imagination; and many who pitied [redacted] Dummy were themselves far greater objects of compassion. Among other accomplishments acquired during her sojourn in Dublin, was the art of basket-making; and it was a pleasing picture to see Alice seated under the spreading hawthorn at her mother's door, twisting the shining and lissom twigs into neat and orderly fashion,—her

bright eyes occasionally glancing over the distant valley, and her taper figures spelling the cause of her sunny laughter, to her pensive mother. There seemed a secret friendship—a deep sympathy between Alice and the birds and wild creatures, that frolicked over the moor: and at her cottage-door, the robin and even the restless blackbird would suffer her to peep into their nests, without stirring from their eggs: the hare would erect its ears, as the light step of Dummy passed near its form, and then reclose its sleepy eyes, in perfect consciousness that it was no enemy whose shadow rested on the landscape. Dummy's cat, owing to the strength of example and good feeling, was as harmless as herself; and "the lone widow" complained that she caught no mice,—certainly a well-founded complaint. But Dummy's beauty was the never-ending theme of country praise; and it was, beyond all question, extraordinary and exquisite in its nature. Her form was so fragile, so delicate, so wavering, that she reminded one of the undulating willow, rather than a tangible creature of flesh and blood. Her eyes were remarkable both for dazzling and intense expression; and her teeth—so white, so even—imparted a brightness to her smile, that rendered her countenance absolutely sunny.

"She's a bonny bird—God bless her, Mrs. Furlong, ma'am," said one of her few visiters to the widow on a summer's evening, while Poor Dummy was busily employed in peeling some osiers, that looked more taper than her fingers.

"And sure it's many would put up with her in-

firmity, and thank ye too, to have such a child: if she hasn't got a bachelor yet, more shame on the boys, for sure it's a hard-working, let-alone a beautiful, wife she'd make—and she a scholar into the bargain; and it's many a man would bid a high price for a silent woman, who never could turn her tongue to make an ill answer, even if she had a turn for that same. Now, Mrs. Furlong, ma'am, may be ye wouldn't take it ill of an ould residenter, like myself, to ask ye if ye know what she do be so often writing, upon the nice white paper, of an evening, sometimes; and sometimes of a morning, out upon the moor; or near the beehive, there, in the far corner—ay, out yonder, where ye can see the chimneys of Castle Rathleen above the trees; and Mrs. Francis's cottage hard by."

"Why then, indeed, Biddy agra! sorra a word o' writing I know in the wide world from Adam, barrin' one word, that just holds half-a-dozen letters, that I bargained with her master in Dublin, for God's sake, to teach her first; and then, by going over them so often, I learnt them myself, and can tell them in any part of a book, or upon paper, as clear as e'er a scholar of them all, either singly or together."

"Why, then, that's very clever of you; and you would have been a blessed woman, Mrs. Furlong, if it had been yer luck. I suppose it would be an offence to ask what the word was?"

"No offence in life, Biddy," replied the widow, her pale cheek flushing, and her fingers twitching the string of her apron at the same time; "no offence in life, nor no shame either, thank God—the word was

'*father*'—if she couldn't spake it from the lip, she can feel it in the heart." There was a pause—the widow's lip quivered, and Biddy took advantage of the opportunity to draw forth from her bosom half a sheet of scrawled paper.

"May be, Mrs. Furlong, this is written all over with the word—this is what she do be at, sometimes. She dropt it, and I thought I'd show it to you."

Mrs. Furlong turned the paper over and over, up and down, but could make nothing of it.

"I see an F and an A, and the other letters that I know, here and there," she said, "but not put together as they ought to be:" and then she beckoned her daughter to her, and showed her the writing. In an instant, face, neck, and bosom, became one scarlet flush—her fair white brow grew red as the damask rose: letting the thin wand of willow which she held drop, she covered her face with her hands; then, as if suddenly recollecting that her mother could not read what she had written, she sprang forward, and falling on her knees, entreated to possess the paper. Her mother desired, by signs, that she would communicate the contents. No, that she would not do.

"Then," whispered Biddy, "keep it and show it to his reverence, for a rason I have; and he'll tell ye the rights of it." The widow resolved to act upon her gossip's advice; placed the paper in her bosom; and without heeding poor Dummy's silent eloquence, proceeded that same evening to the dwelling of the priest.

The good *padre* was standing, or rather leaning, against the lonely post that supported his garden-gate, his "big coat" hanging like a mantle from his shoulders, and his breviary opened at evening mass. He glanced over the rude scrawl, and smiled as if something amusing was contained therein.

"Would your reverence be pleased to tell me the contents of that same?" said the mother, courtesying.

"The contents?" repeated the priest.

"If your honour pleases," replied the widow, with another courtesy.

"Indeed, my good friend, I believe, as well as I can make it out, it is poetry."

"An, an, sir! I hope that's nothing bad."

"Bad!" in his turn, repeated the priest, smiling, —"oh, no; you are poetical sometimes yourself, Mrs. Furlong, although you do not know it."

The widow again courtesied, for she did not comprehend what his reverence said.

"Bring Alice here to-morrow morning, about nine o'clock, Mrs. Furlong; and do not tell her I have seen this."

"Very well, yer honour; only, as it is nothing bad, may be you'd give me the paper."

"To-morrow—to-morrow you shall have it.—Good evening, and God bless you, my good woman."

Mrs. Furlong turned to do as she was desired, and then, remembering something else, courtesied again.

"I humbly ask yer reverence's pardon, but I

brought a new bottle with me, thinking that may be you would be so good as fill it, with your own hands, with holy water—it would have double strength then; and, somehow, Alice is not quite well—not altogether in such good spirits, and does not sleep as much, as I think she ought: so I thought may be a sprinkle of holy water morning and evening might do her good."

The priest, it is recorded, smiled again; but he filled the bottle, as "the lone widow" requested, with his own hands, and presented it to her as she departed: then, calling to his maid to bring him his cane, his "best beaver," and to help him on with the "big coat," he set off to visit Mrs. Francis, whose husband, according to the jest that went amongst his neighbours, had travelled after the rebellion to Botany Bay, *for the benefit of his education!*

"Oh, but it's your honour that's kindly welcome," said Mrs. Francis, as the priest entered; "and the tread of your foot is the sweetest music that ever comes near my door. Frank, set a chair for his reverence. Oh, Frank, Frank! not the one with the three legs—there, the bran new one, the lucky one, made of the black wood from foreign parts—it's an easy chair: and by the same token the cat knows it, for she's for ever taking her *kitlings* into it."

"Thank ye kindly, Mrs. Francis; but I want a word with Frank, and then I'll have spake with you, honey;" and away went the priest, followed by

Frank, into the little clean, neatly sanded room at the back of Mrs. Francis's extensive kitchen. The words that passed, or the sentiments expressed during that interview, it is not in my power to record. Mrs. Francis was as anxious to discover their import, but with as little success; for the priest "was a close man, who never let his ear hear what his mouth spoke:" such being the case, no wonder I remained in ignorance. Frank returned to the kitchen with an awkward air; and, seating himself near the door, began tying together the old spaniel's ears, to his mother's manifest annoyance. Presently the priest summoned her also to a private audience; and when she returned, accompanied by her spiritual adviser, it was evident she was in no gentle temper.

"And so, Frank, you have been playing the sly; and, instead of banking the water-dam for Job Wright's mill, you have been making love to the lone widow's daughter."

"I don't deny it, mother."

"You don't deny it, mother!" repeated the dame, scornfully; "and a pretty taste you have!—a dummy!—a poor little creature, whose waist is not thicker than my wrist, and whose father ——"

"My good Mrs. Francis," interrupted the priest, "the less either party say about their fathers the better; for my part, I have always thought that it is entirely owing to such mothers as yourself that such young men as Frank turn out so well."

A well-timed compliment always tells with a woman—the priest knew his advantage. Mrs. Francis

smiled, and the *padre* seated himself in the easy chair: the merits of the poor dumb girl, her beauty, and the industry and virtues of her mother, were discussed; and the heart of the dame softened when she called to mind that time *had been* when Mrs. Furlong's family were better off than her own. It is a fact that the simple circumstance which would have excited the jealousy of an English family, only increased this good woman's esteem for "the lone widow;" and the evening terminated by her consenting that in a year, if things went on smoothly—why, she would not oppose the union of Alice and Frank.

"God for ever bless your reverence, and it's a sin and a shame you can't fall in love yourself. If I was only *sure* she cared about me," said Frank, as he stood beneath the moonlight at the priest's door.

The priest drew forth the scrawl: "Look, Frank, you are a good and an honest boy, or I would not let you into so much. What do you read on that paper?"

"FRANK. FRANK. Why, its all over *Franks*, your honour; and that's my name."

"And women do not write so often for their pleasure a name they do not love."

"And she wrote that," said the youth—"may I keep it?"

"No," replied the priest; "I promised to return it to her mother."

The young man kissed the paper as if it had been a holy relic, and gave it back to his confessor.

It is easy to imagine the conclusion. I remember Poor Dummy the handsome mother of many children, who each and all pronounced the word "father," and "grandfather" too, entirely to the satisfaction of "the lone widow." I remember, also, the chairs and cradles which Alice manufactured for the adornment of her own cottage. I remember, moreover, the pretty basket filled with poultry and eggs, her annual present to her old friend the priest. And, above all, I remember the wicker cage she made for the finest thrush I ever possessed: indeed, I remember a great deal about her that would be tiresome to repeat; for the annals of the poor who clustered around "the big house," have sunk more deeply into my heart than the records of the great, or the follies of the gay. I can only say, that few in this magnificent world deserved more admiration or respect than Poor Dummy.

AMINA.

BY L. E. L.

Not yet to the dancers—love, leave not thy seat;
My own is the ground that is touched by thy feet.
They'll not miss thee, tho' mine be the foot and the hand
The lightest, the fairest, that shine thro' their band.
Give no[illegible]me revel a look nor a thought:
Mine [illegible]n be the moment which dearly I've bought.
I know not what Fate will demand for delay;
I know I am happy—I know I will stay.
No power upon earth but thy own can divide
My heart from thy heart, and my step from thy side.

II.

I see thy lip tremble, I see thy cheek white,
And thy large eyes look strangely upon me to-night.
But I call not back, maiden, one word I have said;
There is blood on my hand, and a price on my head:
One merit—one only, my faults may atone;
Whatever I am—I am truly thine own:
One wave of thy hand, or one look from thine eye,
O'er the wide world would send me, that world to defy.
I love thee, Amina! as few ever love;
I look to thy face as to heaven above;
For thy sake I think of my earlier years;
I bring to thy bosom its memories and tears.

III.

I saw thee—the parasite creepers had made
Of leaves and of blossoms a sweet ambuscade;

The flowers their rich colours and faint perfume shed,
And the fragrant grass pillowed thy delicate head;
The fountain beside thee reflected thy face,
Thy long hair fell round thee with exquisite grace:
I only remember of all I sought there,
The turn of thy neck, and the fall of thy hair.
The sword that I wear has been idle since then;
My pistols are rusted, impatient my men.
Now, gloomy the tidings that come o'er the sea:
I must not stay longer in fair St. Lucie.

IV.

Look out from the lattice—the moon's on the tide:
She rules it as thou shalt rule me when my bride.
In yon inland creek rocking a light vessel lies,
'Tis a bird on the wing ere it sweep through the skies;
Amid the dark branches of shadowy green
Like boughs that are leafless her tall spars are seen.
Come with me to yon vessel, my beloved and my own!
Her deck is my kingdom, and shall be thy throne:
Come, queen of the wild waves! Amina! with me,
And leave the green valleys of fair St. Lucie.

V.

No home made too lonely will darken thy mind;
No father, no mother, thou leavest behind;
There are no old affections thy heart to divide:
I am glad there is no one to love thee beside.
If this hour unites us, we never shall part:
My fairy! my flower! come home to my heart.
Dost thou see a dark shadow, far away on the main?
'Tis the frigates that seek me, and seek me in vain.
Thy sweet eyes are downcast—mine own thou wilt be.
Come far over ocean from fair St. Lucie!

GALERIA;

OR,

THE DESERTED VILLAGE.

A TALE, BY THE COUNTESS OF BLESSINGTON.

"Pourquoi tous les hommes ne voyent-ils pas sans une émotion profonde les ruines même les plus humbles? Ne serait-ce pas tout simplement pour eux un image du malheur dont ils sentent si diversement le poids? Si les cimetières font penser à la mort, un village abandonné fait songer aux peines de la vie; mais la mort est un malheur prévu, tandis que les peines de la vie sont infinies; or, l'infini n'est-il pas le secret des grandes mélancolies?"—BALZAC.

"WOULD the signora like to see the deserted village?" asked the master of the post-house where we stopped to refresh our horses, on our route from Rome to the castle of Bracciano; "it is not above a quarter of a mile from this place, and the few strangers who travel our road all go to examine it."

Luigi, for so was the master of the post-house named, was a handsome, intelligent-looking man: his military bearing, and the mustache that shaded his lip, denoted that he had served in the army; and a politeness and gentleness in his manner, bore evidence that he had been accustomed to present

himself before ladies: his language was correct, and, as well as his appearance and manner, indicated that he had seen much of the world; while a certain romantic air betrayed that its contact had not obliterated the natural bias of his character, which was that of a reflective and sentimental turn. "There stands the village," continued he, pointing to a mass of buildings seated on an eminence overlooking the fertile valley of Arona, along which the clear and sparkling river of that name glided like a silver serpent, now showing itself sporting through verdant meadows, and then losing itself amidst wooded knolls. We set out to view Galeria, our communicative host acting as guide, and, after a short walk, found ourselves on a rustic bridge, at the base of the eminence on which the ruined village is seated, and which, seen from this spot, has a most picturesque appearance.

Crossing the bridge, we ascended a steep and winding road, each turn of which presented new beauties, and arrived at an arched gate of stone-work, surmounted by a clock, whose dial still remained, though the hands, that had been wont to mark the flight of time, had disappeared. This gate formed the entrance to Galeria, and the view from it was beautiful. The village consisted of about fifty houses, containing from three to five rooms each, many of them having their rude walls covered with gaudy prints of saints and martyrs, attired in robes of glaring scarlet, ultra-marine blue, and bright yellow, and possessing little of the beauty of holiness, being

most hideous to behold; the artist who designed them having carefully avoided all violation of the scriptural commandment, "not to make unto ourselves the likeness of any thing that is in the heaven above, on the earth beneath, or in the water under the earth."

The doors and windows still remained, and some wooden articles of furniture were scattered around; the sashes stood on the deserted hearths, wild flowers and ivy nearly covered the windows, and innumerable birds were flitting about and sending forth their joyful notes. Each house had its garden, once neat and trim, as our guide assured us, but now presenting little wildernesses, intermingled with bright flowers peeping forth from the tangled mazes of shrubs and weeds that had nearly overgrown them. A silence, interrupted only by the carols of the birds, reigned around; and, as we pulled the latch of the doors of many of these humble cottages, and entered the deserted chambers, the echoes of our steps sent forth a melancholy sound. A small cemetery, with its wooden and stone crosses, nearly covered by briers, nettles, and weeds, stood at one side of the village; and on the other was a deep well, with its bucket and chain, the iron thickly coated by the rust which was the consequence of its long disuse and exposure to the weather. Near to this neglected implement, was a stone bench, sheltered by a clump of trees, where, probably, the aged peasants had been wont to enjoy the delicious evenings, only to be found in a southern climate: and

in front of it was a level space, which looked as if it had been the play-ground, or the scene of the dances of the young.

A small chapel, with its cross and bell, a fragment of the rope for ringing the latter still hanging from the wall, showed that the humble inhabitants of this secluded spot were not neglectful of religion. Here all the drama of life had been performed, from the *entrée* to the *exit*—but where were the performers? Not a soul was to be seen; not even a domestic animal passing through the grass-grown streets —all, all were fled.

"Ah! signora," said our host of the post-house, in answer to my exclamation, "it is a long and a melancholy story; but, if you wish, I will relate it,— my poor mother, peace be to her soul, often repeated it to me, as we sat on the bench in the porch, when the moonlight was silvering the old gateway of Galeria, and shining on the dial of the clock, which looked like the face of a spirit. Well, signora, forty years ago, this same deserted village was a scene of active and cheerful industry—parents surrounded by their children and grand-children; young people who had grown up together, and learned to love, ere yet the meaning of the word was known to them; for, in our sunny clime, signora, we experience the passion before reason is sufficiently mature to enable us to combat its violence, we are unconscious of either the cause or the consequences. In the lonely and quiet spot over which we are now pacing, the sounds of the guitar and tambourine, mingled with the hum of

joyous voices every evening, when amusement succeeded the labours of the day. Among all the young women of Galeria, Vincenza Martelli was the most beautiful; her slight and graceful form lost none of its charms in the pretty camiciuola* and short full plaited gonella† of our Roman peasant dress; and her glossy raven hair appeared still more black and shining in contrast with the snowy whiteness of the fettola,‡ that was laid in a square fold over it. Her straight brows, and the bright eyes that sparkled beneath them, gave expression to her oval and clear brown face; and, if the rose shone not on her cheek, the rich red of her lip made one forget its absence. Her teeth, signora, my poor mother used to say, were as white as young almonds when they first leave the shell; and her laugh was as joyous as sunshine. The neighbours used to pause to look at her as she returned from the well, an amphora of water on her head so balanced that not a single drop escaped, though her hands did not touch it; and her step was so light, that it seemed as if her little feet would not crush a flower. Every one talked of her beauty except Giovanni Spinelli, who felt its power the most—he was never tired of looking at her, and, even while they were yet children, the neighbours used to call them the lovers.

"Giovanni was the handsomest youth in the village, and perhaps it was for this reason that rumour first distinguished him as a fitting partner for Vin-

* Bodice. † Petticoat. ‡ Plaited kerchief.

cenza. He sought for her the ripest grapes and most melting figs; the first violets of the spring and the last rose of summer were sure to be hers; for it is only by such simple gifts, signora, that the poor and humble can show their affection. Vincenza would receive them with pleasure, and repay Giovanni with a smile and kind words; nor was a glance wanting, such as love alone can bestow. She would place the flowers in her hair and bosom, where they remained until, seeking her lowly couch, she consigned them to a vase of water, fresh from the fountain, and placed them on the table close by her pillow, beneath the picture of the Madonna. At other times, she would weave the flowers into a garland for the large image of her patron saint that adorned the chapel; and it was allowed, that no girl in the village could weave a garland to be compared with that of Vincenza.

"The affection of Vincenza and Giovanni had grown with their growth, and strengthened with their strength: neither could remember when it had commenced, or when they had been able to support existence asunder. Together they sang the love ditties that they played on the guitar, or danced the tarantella to the merry sound of the tambourine; together they had knelt and prayed before the shrine of the Madonna, and offered up votive flowers before the images of the tutelar saints. Each had become associated with the thoughts, feelings, dreams, and hopes of the other; they had never contemplated the possibility of even a temporary separation; their

little hamlet was the world to them, the boundary of their wishes, and the scene where their happiness was to be crowned. The chapel now before us, signora, was viewed by the lovers as the place where one day their vows were to be sanctified, their children to be baptized, and their own bodies deposited previously to their consignment to their last narrow home—all this had occurred to all who, under their observation, or within their knowledge, had, like them, grown together, loved, and married; and, therefore, Vincenza and Giovanni believed it would be their fate. This supposed certainty of the future threw an additional shade of tenderness over the feelings of the young people: they wholly depended on each other for happiness; and the few hours of absence that the manual labours of Giovanni in the fields occasioned, were sustained and counted with impatience by both. How often has Vincenza looked to the west to see whether the sun gave token of seeking his couch, that being the signal of Giovanni's return! Seldom had he repaired to the field without bearing in his hat a bouquet of flowers, the gift of Vincenza; and as seldom did he return without bringing some rustic offering to her. Ah! signora, the richest gifts which the grand can bestow, yield not such pure pleasure as the humble offerings of the poor and lowly! I, signora, have seen much of the world; I have served in the army, and been many years a courier, during which time I have been employed in some noble families; and, on occasions of marriages, have seen jewels given which might ran-

som a prince, and whose dazzling lustre made my eyes ache, without their conferring half the delight that a simple riband, or kerchief of silk, has excited in the breast of one of our peasants, when presented by the hand of love. Ay, you grand ones of the earth, signora, have so many different sources of gratification, that, when you love, it is only another enjoyment added to your vast store; but, with us, love constitutes the whole, the sole, the only one! You have each your different pursuits, your different pleasures, and can amuse yourselves so well when asunder, that you depend not on each other for happiness. Forgive me, signora, for my boldness in thus expressing my reflections, and permit me to return to my narrative.

"So genuine had been the affection of the lovers, that it created a sympathy and respect throughout the hamlet: their parents treated them as affianced; and each rural belle, or beau, quoted them as models of example to the other, when dissatisfied by negligence or coquetry; for, even in the most remote hamlet, signora, a woman is still a woman.

"Many years before the period to which I refer, a dangerous malady had reduced the father of Giovanni to the brink of the grave; and the despairing wife had vowed before her patron saint, that, if her husband recovered, she would devote her eldest son to the church. The illness terminated favourably; and she prepared to fulfil the duty she had imposed upon herself. Andrea was the name of the youth upon whom this rigid fortune was entailed; but,

happily, his calm contemplative turn of mind rendered him not unfitted for its endurance. While yet a child, he was treated as a chosen vessel; one, who was to be an intermediate point between those dear to him and the God he was to serve. The monastic habit was assumed by him ere he had yet quitted the plays of boyhood; and he met with affectionate indulgence from the knowledge that he was doomed soon to leave his native village and all that he loved, to live in cloistered solitude at a few miles' distance. The spires of his convent you may see yonder, signora; but they are more visible at sunset, when the last rays of the bright luminary tinge them. My mother has told me, that often and often did she see Andrea, with Vincenza and Giovanni leaning on his shoulders, their arms crossing as they leant on him, pause to watch those glittering spires fading in the horizon; and the lovers would draw closer to Andrea, reminded by them that soon *he* would be torn from them, and be condemned to the solitude of that cloister. How many vows of affection did they interchange with this dear brother! Andrea, in return, promising to pray for their happiness in his daily orisons before the altar, and in his cell. They dwelt on the visits they should make him; the flowers, fruit, and new honey, they would bring him: Giovanni archly adding, in spite of the blushing cheek of Vincenza, which she vainly attempted to conceal on the shoulder of Andrea, that their first-born son should be named Andrea.

"Such was the fascination of this mild and affec-

tionate youth, that his presence was felt to be a source of pleasure, instead of restraint, to the lovers: he was scarcely less dear to Vincenza than to Giovanni, and was necessary to the happiness of both. He had now reached his seventeenth year; Giovanni was a year younger; and Vincenza had completed her fifteenth birth-day. In a few days, Andrea was to enter the convent; and his approaching departure cast a gloom over the hamlet. At this period, continued and heavy rain had swollen the Arona; and, instead of the blue and limped stream which you now perceive, it had become a rapid and discoloured flood. A pet lamb, given by Giovanni to Vincenza, had wandered from the hamlet to the bank of the river, into which it unfortunately fell as she approached to secure it. Unmindful of the depth and the rapidity of the current, Vincenza rushed in to save her favourite; and was soon carried away by the force of the torrent. She was on the point of sinking, when Andrea arrived at the spot; and threw himself into the river, to rescue her. He seized her by the long tresses that escaped from the bodkin that confined them, and drew her towards the shore; when overcome by the exertion, and borne down by the weight of the monastic cloak, he was carried away by the current, and sank to rise no more, at the very moment his brother arrived to snatch Vincenza from the arms of death.

"Giovanni would have left his Vincenza lifeless, as she appeared, on the bank, and have rushed into the water to share Andrea's fate; but that he was forcibly withheld by some of the peasants, who return-

ing from their labour, had arrived in time to witness the catastrophe, and to save Giovanni from suicide! It was many hours ere Vincenza was restored to animation, or that she became sensible of the danger she had escaped; but, when returning consciousness brought the fearful scene before her, she scarcely might be said to rejoice in her restoration to an existence that she knew was purchased by the life of Andrea; and throwing herself into the arms of Giovanni, and mingling her tears with his, she prayed him to forgive her for having deprived him of a brother.

"When the lifeless corse of Andrea was discovered, his clenched hand still grasped a tress of raven hair, which even death itself had failed to compel him to relinquish; and his contracted brow, and compressed lips, marked the struggle he had made to save her to whom it had belonged. Bitter were the tears that bedewed his pale forehead, while bending over him. Vincenza and Giovanni passionately expressed their resolution, ever and fondly to cherish the memory of his virtues and disastrous fate: then, feeling that in losing this dear and trusted brother, one of the links of the chain that united them was broken, they vowed henceforth to be all to each other. Alas! they foresaw not that this terrible affliction, their first in the school of trials, would be the cause of so much future misery, and that their lives, hitherto so tranquil and happy, were never more to know peace.

"No sooner had the mortal remains of Andrea been consigned to the grave, bedewed by the tears of

all the village, than the mother declared that Giovanni, her only surviving son, must be devoted to the church, in the place of him she had lost. In vain were the tears and despair of the lovers, rendered now doubly dear to each other by the grief that Andrea's death had caused them—in vain were the intercessions of relatives, friends, and neighbours—the superstitious and bigoted mother was resolved on the sacrifice of her child, of whose fate she now became the sole arbitress, in consequence of the death of her husband, which occurred in a few days after that of Andrea. To his wife, the deceased parent, a weak and good-natured man, and the richest in the village, bequeathed all his wealth; with the chief portion of which she proclaimed her intention of endowing the convent as soon as Giovanni should pronounce his vows. This *declaration* enlisted the whole of the monks on her side; and, entreaties, representations, and promises, having failed to produce any effect on Giovanni, an order was procured from the commandant of a neighbouring town, for a party of military, to tear him from the arms of his agonized and *despairing* Vincenza, and bear him to the convent; where he was kept a close prisoner.

"The deep anguish of Vincenza failed to produce any effect on the obdurate mother of her lover; nay, the poor girl was looked upon by the inflexible fanatic, as an impious creature, who wanted to place herself between her son and heaven. Vincenza used to sit for hours on a rustic seat that commanded a view of the convent spires; and, when the deepening shades

of evening hid them from her sight, she would return, pale and silent, to her cheerless home, and throw herself on that pillow, from which peaceful slumber had now fled for ever.

"The unhappiness of the youthful lovers had thrown a gloom over the whole village; for, though a superstitious dread of the monks had checked the expressions of the sympathy all felt, it had but rendered the feeling more profound. The sounds of the guitar, or tambourine, were no longer heard to break on the stilness of evening: gloom had succeeded to cheerfulness in the lately happy village, and all was changed. Poor Giovanni had undergone a system of persecution, instigated even less by superstition than by the cupidity of the monks, who wished to ensure the wealth promised by his mother. Coercion had been tried in vain; persuasion, too, had hitherto failed to induce him to repeat the vows that must separate him for ever from his Vincenza; but, when he discovered that on his compliance depended his sole chance of ever again leaving the walls of his convent, he yielded a reluctant and painful assent; and pronounced himself the servant of God; while his heart beat tumultuously with an earthly passion.

"Six additional dreary months were added to those already passed in his monastic prison, ere Giovanni was permitted to pass its guarded portals. Each hour of this period had been counted with bitterness of feeling by Vincenza; who sometimes accused her lover of weakness, or inconstancy, in yielding to their separation (unconscious of the persecution he was un-

dergoing;) but she still oftener wept their fate, shedding those bitter tears that sear the cheek on which they fall, and refresh not the heart from which they spring.

"The mother of Giovanni was taken dangerously ill; and when her recovery was hopeless, her son was permitted for the first time to leave his convent, that he might close her dying eyes. He arrived but in time to perform this filial office; for, in a few minutes after he had entered her chamber, she expired. By her bed-side he found Vincenza, who had nursed her through her malady; and who, worn out by grief, and watching by the sick-bed, was scarcely to be recognised.

"Those who were in the outer room declared, that for some time they heard convulsive sobs, and deep groans, mingled with whispers; and then a silence, befitting the chamber of death, prevailed. When an hour had elapsed, and not a sound had manifested itself to the attentive ears of the anxious listeners, they entered the room, and to their utter astonishment found only the lifeless corpse of the mother; the face still wet with the tears of Giovanni and Vincenza. A door, that conducted from the chamber into the garden, was open, and evidently indicated the mode of the lovers' escape. Whither had they gone? was the question all asked: but none could solve. Could Vincenza, the good, the pure-minded Vincenza, have eloped with a priest? No! so daring an impiety was too dreadful even to be imagined; and yet, how else account for their disappearance? The two monks who

had been sent to guard Giovanni from the convent, returned thither to tell the dreadful tale of sacrilege; and the superior despatched emissaries through all the surrounding country, to arrest the unhappy, and, as they were termed, impious pair. Still no tidings could be obtained of them; no one had seen,—no one had heard any trace of them. The monks took possession of all that the deceased widow had left; and, by their rapacity, disgusted all the inhabitants of Galeria. Well, signora, various were the conjectures formed on every side as to the probable fate of the lovers: they were believed to be living in sin together in some distant part of the country, and, truth to say, many people were more inclined to pity than to condemn them.

"Summer had come again; the waters of the Arona had receded from its banks, and some peasants had entered the bed of the river, to obtain gravel for the repair of the road, when their attention was excited by a dark mass, half shrouded by sand. They removed it; and discovered at the very spot where Andrea had perished, the bodies of the lovers locked in each other's arms, and wrapped in the monastic cloak of Giovanni!

"My mother saw them, signora: and she told me that the long tresses of Vincenza were wound round the ill-fated youth, as if to prevent their remains from being separated in death.

"They were the last who were ever placed in the cemetery: here, signora, is their grave, the only one preserved free from the weeds and nettles that over-

grow the others; for my poor mother performed this humble task while she lived, in memory of their fidelity and misfortunes; and since her death I have faithfully fulfilled the office.

"The monks, enraged at the pity displayed by the inhabitants of Galeria, pronounced a curse on the village, which so alarmed its natives, that they fled the spot, leaving nearly all their household goods and utensils behind; and this became the Deserted Village."

THE SLEEPING PARTNERS;

A SKETCH OF THE HARD FROST:

BY T. C. GRATTAN, ESQ.,

AUTHOR OF "HIGH-WAYS AND BY-WAYS," ETC. ETC.

The snow had lain for several weeks in crisp masses on the streets and boulevards of Brussels, and its surface was worn as smooth and slippery as glass, by the few coaches that plied during the inclement weather, and the numerous *traineaux*, or sledges, for which this inclemency was the very harvest-time. Nothing could be more animated than the general appearance of these vehicles, and few things more absurd when examined in detail. Their brilliant colours and gildings, the gay plumes and caparisons of the horses, and the fanciful costumes of the drivers and the driven, formed a striking and picturesque combination when gazed at from a distance; but when one closed in upon the imposing train that whisked by so rapidly, and inspected its motley ma-

terials, every individual machine was but a galloping illustration of the bathos. A few, being private property, had some slight pretensions to taste in their decorations; but the great majority, hired out for each occasion, were gaudy and flimsy receptacles for a poor vanity, which braved the annoyance of their cramped *accommodations* and the piercing cold, for the glory of being stared at by the crowds that thronged the flagged ways round the park, which was the grand scene of exhibition.

Those who have never seen a *traineau* may be glad to know that it is a sort of car, or *shell*—for such is, in most cases, its fantastic shape—without wheels; capable of containing one person, with moderate discomfort; or two, painfully wedged together. On a peak, behind, the driver places himself astride, and, with his feet resting on the shafts which shoot out in the rear and terminate in an united point, he guides his horse, or horses, by reins of cord coming most awkwardly over the shoulders of the person in front. It requires no small cleverness to preserve his equilibrium, while he leans to the right or left, having at one and the same time to look sharply out after his shambling steeds, and to keep up his soft whisperings into the ear of the furred fair one, for the honour of driving whom he suffers such a straddlegged gibbeting. It is something awful to look at these Jehus when they have a couple of awkward horses to manage, either abreast or tandem, car-

veting at every curve in the course, running at wrong angles wherever a corner is to be turned, and threatening utter annihilation to the frost-bitten face of the poor lady placed at the mercy of their hoofs. The prow of the car is always shaped and coloured in the abominable likeness of some dragon or hippogriff, or other monster of ugliness; some wagging their heads or flapping their wings with the motion of the sledge, or shaking out tongues of flame-coloured tin, or staring with a large pair of green glass goggle eyes — meant altogether to look very funny.

These efforts at pleasantry are generally failures; but, to an English eye, nothing can be more irresistibly ludicrous than the sober seriousness of the attempt at style in these and other equipages. The gaudy liveries and grotesque accoutrements of the grooms and coachmen form a virtual act of bankruptcy against description. The cocked-hats, broad-flapped laced coats, and Hessian boots, of the footmen, bid defiance to prose or poesy; but the appearance of a *jocki*, such as is an indispensable atrocity in the completion of a *traineau* equipment, really out-Punches Punch. A continental *jocki* is decidedly the most unhappy possible specimen of human degradation; for, unlike the tumblers and rope-dancers of a fair green, he does not put himself in masquerade or exhibit himself for his own amusement or profit, but merely in accordance with his master's vitiated

taste, which is invariably as bitter bad as that of rhubarb, gentian, and camomile, combined. These unhappy caricatures precede the *traineaux* on huge, high-trotting steeds with long tails; and it is impossible to conceive any thing more painfully risible than their appearance, jogging away in high-peaked saddles, long stirrups, jackets, hunting-caps, wide leather breeches, and troopers' boots. To disfigure their domestics out of all semblance of regular respectability seemed to be a study with the Dutch nobility of those days, for I speak of five or six years back, when the heavy hand of the Hollander crushed all the buoyancy of Belgian spirit and taste. Attached to one frightful equipage — a huge German landau, with the wheels taken off, tied on a sledge, and dragged on at the slowest possible rate — was a coachman in purple livery, a footman in dark green, and a cadaverous-looking *jocki*, of about sixty years of age, and six feet and a half high, in a bright yellow jacket and pink cap! It looked as if each servant had snatched a stripe from a rainbow, and clothed himself in it at random.

But there was one exception to these execrable combinations in the droski of the Prince of Orange. This was a present from the Emperor of Russia, and was, in its *ensemble*, such a contrast to the *traineaux*, that one was surprised at the dulness which failed to attempt an imitation, or the callousness to ridicule which allowed so many persons to put their miser-

able equipages in perpetual contact with it. It was lightly built, strong, free from all gaudiness of colour or decoration; driven by a regular Cossack, in his native costume and long bushy beard, and drawn by a pair of thorough-bred horses, light limbed, and long tailed, one of which, with his head ardently forward, trotted at his full speed of a dozen miles an hour; while the other, with curved neck, and head held low down by a tight martingale, galloped along at the same pace, most gracefully varying the interest of the exhibition.

This equipage would have no doubt found some attempts at imitation, had not its owner been far from popular in those days among his countrymen; for he was then an Englishman in manners, a Belgian in heart, and a liberal in politics.

I don't know how I have happened to linger so long on these recollections of the ludicrous and amusing; for the main subject of my sketch is of a far different nature. It may appear incongruous to approach a painful topic in a mood of merriment. In entering the chamber of death we ought not, perhaps, to

> "Trip it gaily, as we go,
> On the light fantastic toe"—

Yet, if in the sad varieties of life pleasure is fenced round with pain; if the rose cannot be plucked with-

out our first feeling the thorns, it may, after all, be a not indecorous philosophy that would festoon with "wreathed smiles" the portal which leads to the inevitable grave.

During that hard, hard frost of 1829–30, when all that was bright and generous—wine, wit, even charity—seemed at least benumbed, and all the social enjoyments shrunk from a wide-spread circle into a point, the poor of Belgium—always in a frightful misproportion to the general population—suffered intensely. Many were the families cramped by cold and thinned by famine. Benevolence paid freely its heavy tax. The wards of the hospitals were full, and the hearts of the home patients as well; for many a stove was without fuel—and, oh, how many a stomach without food! It was altogether a heart-rending season, one that neither body nor mind is likely to forget.

But the peculiar feature of this hard winter in Brussels, the marked circumstance which fixes it more particularly in my memory, was the decree of night banishment, issued by the authorities of the city against that wretched class of beings who have always possessed an extraordinary claim on my sympathy,—the wandering, idle, lazy, houseless, friendless Savoyards. In no season or country are those poor boys any thing in my eyes but objects of great compassion. Even in the native freedom of their own glorious mountains they are marked as

vagabonds and outcasts; every youthful brow seems to bear Cain's mark, yet they have killed no brother, nor taught a new crime to their little world. Born as it were on speculation, reared from the mother's lap like some animal fattened for the market, doomed to banishment from the cradle up, they have no tendril ties binding their young hearts to home, no links of family love, no hope of domestic quiet, no haven of peace towards which to look. To turn out on life's broad highway and to beg, is their foredoomed career, as soon as ever their legs are strong enough to carry into execution the sentence which is born within them.

What can such mothers as theirs care for such offspring as they? How little of the common culture which the female heart, even in the savage wilds of Africa, lavishes on its offspring, can fall to the lot of those unhappy weeds, flung on the world's wide ocean, to swim or sink by chance! Their marmots or their mice, the sole friends of their destiny, are better off than they, for *they* have minds—the splendid curse of the unfortunate!

Not one excitement, not one enjoyment brightens the path of the Savoyard child, who turns his back on the high places of his birth, to brave the dangers of the populous waste which spreads before him, interminably hopeless. Degradation of the basest kind awaits him on the very threshold of the world. His passport is signed and sealed in misery. Some servile

trick of imitation, some cringing tones of mock hilarity, coarse raiment, a hard couch, scant food, a tyrant taskmaster, form the bright side of the picture in which he is the main figure: but imagine him in ill health, in cold, hunger, desolateness, and despair! Who does not feel a heart-cramp as he looks at the poor beggar-boy, and gives himself one moment's time to think?

Well, it so happened that in the very depth of the hard winter Brussels was unusually populous of those parias of the civilised world; a shoal of them, on its way to England, had been stopped short by the cruel frost—even the instinct of suffering born with the Savoyard boys could not stand against the pinching torments of that season. The ice-covered roads wore out their weary feet; the keen wind pierced their flimsy rags, and cut them to the heart. They could move no further, and Brussels seemed a heaven to the hapless group.

For some days they revelled in all the ignominy of street antics. They pattered on the hard snow, and played on their cracked viols, and threw out their smiles and quirks with the plaintive meanness of mendicant solicitation. The public heart was not yet quite congealed. Purse-strings were opened, and the poor Savoyards picked up a passing store of charity. But the conscience of the corporation at length became frost-bitten. Fear lest the native pauperism might by and by want supplemental funds,

and the patrician stores be mulcted for some new forced loan, prevailed on "the authorities" to launch an *ordonnance*, commanding the hapless "vagabonds," whose very title is their patent for general compassion, to sleep without the walls. This *extra muros* banishment was attempted to be justified by the imputation flung on the outcast tribe, of being the chief depredators in the nightly pilferings to which misery drove many a man in those cruel times, to save himself and his family from perishing.

It needs hardly to be stated that in this instance, like almost all others, the mass, which in this nether world must ever be "worldly," were willing enough to let their prejudices range on the side of power, and not sorry for an excuse to check the sympathies which, mayhap, rose up in favour of the oppressed. Men in general are very angry at the imputation of weakness, except when it implies a tendency to be generous; but even then, when boasting that they have been fools, they resolve to put a padlock on their liberality, out of all possibility of being picked. Many, therefore, rejoiced in the moral branding inflicted on the reputations of the poor Savoyards, as an excellent reason for rejecting their importunate appeals. Such epithets as "lazy dog," "little rogue," "idle scoundrel," and the like, were lavished freely; and meanwhile the wretched boys were, like poor Tom, "a-cold."

And so were the marmots, the white mice, and

the monkeys, who partook the drudgery of their master's prosperity, and bore a full part in their privations. While the boys began to droop and shiver, and grow day by day more listless, as coughs and catarrhs oppressed them, and their gnarled limbs became stiffened and swoln, the less sentient but as suffering animals shared amply in the sad companionship. Crouching in their cages, the mice refused to run the wonted round of their wire-work cylinders; the marmots rolled themselves sluggishly up; and a frost-spasm seemed to warp and curdle those crabbed mimicries of man, which mow and chatter as he grins and talks, and jump as he struts, and do *not* "imitate humanity so abominably."

Among the whole of the scattered community I am describing, I never observed any thing like a partnership but in one instance. Those Savoyard boys are most unsocial beings; their principle is evidently "every one for himself." They almost always go about singly; and seem to avoid each other's *beats*. Selfishness is forced upon them by their isolation; and it is the only case in which this odious vice may be pitied as a misfortune, rather than loathed as a fault. There were two of those boys, however, whom I observed frequently together; one was about twelve years of age, the other, perhaps, a year older. They had each a monkey; and the intimacy appeared not to be confined to the bipeds, for, while they crouched in some corner nook, sheltered from

the blast, and counted their money, or discoursed unfathomable secrets in their native *patois*, the monkeys used to cuddle together, scratch each other's backs, or, while one ludicrously "trimmed the other's jacket" with a piece of dirty apple or orange-peel, and the other, perhaps, settled the draggled feather in his comrade's cap, they mutually grinned most ghastly smiles; or, at times, looked so profoundly melancholy and miserable, that one was tempted to believe mere physical suffering incapable of giving such keen expression to a countenance. But this was matter of speculation: what follows is matter of fact.

On one of the bitterest of those cruel mornings, in about the fifth week of the frost, I had occasion to pass early between the two palaces of the King and the Prince of Orange, a station where the *partie carree* just mentioned were wont to fix themselves, to catch stray passengers, before the idle and money-giving part of the population were abroad. There was scarcely any one on the Bouvelards, and not a creature to be seen in or about the park: there was, therefore, no audience on which to work, and, consequently, no acting in what I observed.

Low crouched beside a corner pillar was one of the unfortunate beings above alluded to, moving his body backwards and forwards and sideways, all at once, as it were, with the heaving roll so common in great physical pain—but it is not exclusively so caused. In this case it was induced by intense sor-

row—the poor fellow's monkey was dead in his arms, and he sobbed and moaned over it as though his heart was breaking, and hugged it to his bosom as if he would force it back to life.

I know what a delicate subject I touch on here: from sentiment to absurdity there is scarcely a greater space than from the sublime to the ridiculous. The genius of Sterne could barely save the mark. A dead horse or dog finds ready mourners, where an ass or a monkey meets derision. Humanity has little sympathy for what resembles it the most. Nature does not love the mirror that is held up to it: but if men would be less sensitive to these personal reflections, and forgive the libels of creation in spite of their truth, they could not resist a keen feeling of compassion for the fate of a poor monkey, dragged prisoner from the abounding paradise of his native woods to the ignoble doom of amusing and mimicking such beings as compose the mass of mankind, and then fated to die—how? Who ever thought of inquiring into the average modes of destruction to which these miserable animals are doomed, or of calculating their previous certainties of suffering? Naturalists and philosophers have taken great pains to study the whole species, and still greater to persuade their fellow men that they are by no means so like it as they seem to be; but there is an instinct of stubborn consciousness within us which belies their reasoning; and there was more real nature, and probably

as much true philosophy, in the grief of this poor Savoyard boy for the loss of his second self, than in the scepticism of half the writers, from Alpha to Omega, or, as Tony Lumpkin would have stated it, from A to Izzard.

"Where is your friend?" asked I of the poor mourner, as I gave him a small piece of money—so small that I need not be afraid that my mentioning the fact will me mistaken for ostentation,—so small that my right hand might have blushed had it known what the left was doing.

"Here, here! I have no friend now," was the reply, sobbed out with action suited to the words, and both one and the other acutely touching.

"Well, well, I mean your comrade—where is he?" was my next inquiry.

"I don't know—I don't care—I did not think of him;" and a new burst of lamentation told who he *did* think of.

"It is very unfortunate," said I, "but you must now take care of yourself; crying will do no good, you know; and it is well for the poor thing to be dead, and out of misery; and"—

And I might have run on stringing commonplaces, like an old woman counting her beads, had not the Savoyard turned upon me such a look of brimful and simple reproval that I was quite ashamed of myself. I thought I could read in it a whole volume of refutation to my stale condolements; and I felt

that it was after all as impertinent to worry this poor child with arguments about his deceased brute, as it would be to check the grown-up anguish of an adult for a departed friend. It is monstrous to lay down limits for affection—that monkey was better worth mourning than many a man I could name. Real grief comes from a source too deep to be reached by reason: the only chance is to let the heart send out some other spring from the same reservoir, which may take a different turn. Sorrow may be diverted into other channels; if not, it finally sinks inwards and wears into the soil, and wastes and consumes it until all is over: and that is the simple process of a broken heart, which is never battered in breach, but always destroyed by sap. But this is a rare occurrence, and I have no reason to suspect that my Savoyard became an example of it in this instance.

After some further short conversation, the result of which is neither here nor there, I left him, in a not more comfortless state than I found him; and, as chance would have it, I, within an hour after, turned my steps towards the irregular rising grounds fronting the Prince of Orange's palace outside the Boulevards, beyond the low brick wall which is meant as a protection against, but is in reality a temptation to, contraband. There was a hard path beaten on the snow between the Louvain and Namur gates, winding through rugged ravines and inequalities of surface, hills and hollows, so monotonously

intricate from their snowy covering that a stranger might easily enough have lost his way during a night-wandering at least. I stepped on at a rapid pace, the crisp air powdering my whiskers and side-locks, and my breath condensed into a flake of white mist as it escaped from my lungs, looking as though I sent forth a vapoury flag of truce—for I was at peace with all the world.

I, however, had not yet quite shaken off some angry remains of my discontent with fate, which had treated the Savoyard boy so badly. I thought his case a hard one; and had more than once asked myself why or wherefore a poor devil like that, or the abounding millions of other poor devils, should have their path paved with sharp flints from the cradle to the grave? But getting no satisfactory answer to these ready-springing inquiries, I had shaken my head some four or five times, as much as to say, it's no use—we may knock at the door of knowledge again and again, and not find it at home—"Whatever is is,"—and *there* let us stop the quotation: even if we can't believe it the "best," let us at any rate make the best of it. It is in this way I generally pacify myself, when there is nothing to be got by making war. There is no disgrace in knocking under to destiny, provided one is sure it is not of one's own making. But when it *is*, it is the bounden duty of a brave spirit to battle with the ills he has himself created; and, if he cannot otherwise destroy the offspring of his "minority of sense and majority of folly" (as a quaint writer ex-

presses it), why then he must follow old Saturn's example, and *swallow* them.

Just as I ascended from the deepest part of the ravine and the reverie, and gained the upper ridge, I was startled at hearing a few bars of the melody of "Sweet home," irregularly grinded out of one of those miserable music-mills which are exclusively the badge of the Savoyards. The tones were quite familiar to me, as well as the tune they tortured. I had often heard them from the instrument worked by the comrade of the boy I have been saying so much about, and I thought it an odd coincidence that I should stumble thus on those two poor fellows in the same morning, one in town and the other out of it, and for the first time I had ever seen them separate. I stopped for a moment to catch exactly the direction from which the music, so to call it, proceeded; but it had stopped also. In a minute or two it came again, but in irregular fits, short, quick, and broken, as if the instrument was out of temper as well as out of tune, and dissatisfied with its own discords. The beautiful air, thus murdered, was never so well adapted to carry the mind back to the memory of early associations.

The bleak scene, the foreign land, the gulf between the past and present, the shifting changes of life, the withered hopes, the faded friendships, the altered hearts! "Well, well," thought I, hurrying upwards with my longest strides, "it is all nonsense—a dream, a farce! The past is dead, the future unborn—let me

enjoy the present; it is full blown, ripe and fragrant. When to-morrow grows into to-day, it shall have all my allegiance; when it fades into yesterday, I will forget it—if I can. That is my philosophy! But where is the musician?"

Turning round, my eye fell upon the object it sought: he was lying against the bank at some yards from me on his back, his open eyes turned up to the keen blue sky, his bosom unbuttoned, his arms stretched beside him. "Thinking!" thought I, "and of *home*, perhaps, such as it was—no matter—'be it ever so homely:'" the last two bars of the melody finished the quotation, but played so wildly out of measure, that, in conjunction with the motionless figure of the boy, it sounded quite unearthly. I looked again—it was the monkey that turned the handle of the "hurdy-gurdy," (which was close beside the boy's head) with one hand, while with the other he was pulling the collar of his master's coat, or playing with his long hair, I could not distinguish which exactly.

"What," said I, "sleeping, like the hare, with his eyes open! Is he afraid of the hunters even here?" and I stepped up close and gazed upon him. There was no fear of my awaking him—he was stark dead!

Caught in the too close embrace of the frost, the poor wanderer had perished—perhaps a shelter had been refused him for the night. He had a narrow walk through life, but ample room to die in. He

was stiff when I discovered him as the bank he lay on, and must have been dead many hours; but even then his face, except for his paleness, looked scarce like death. Either he suffered little, or the pang was like a lightning flash; it must have struck on his heart at once, and not approached it by the extremities. The monkey might well have believed *him* to sleep, and imagine the notes of his music box had power to rouse him.

The Savoyard was buried with all the honours of the poor-house — they are not very noisy or exciting. Vagrancy has no right to be fired over; nor do drums and trumpets flourish for the departed poor. Charity is in these cases very taciturn: *in* truth it has not much to boast of. A shell, a sexton, a short prayer or two, and a few shovelfuls of earth — all that is scarcely worth boasting about, or writing about either — so I leave the funeral to the reader's imagination.

I took care that the other poor fellow duly enjoyed his lawful inheritance — some three or four francs in a leathern bag, the coarse suit of clothes, the hurdy-gurdy, and the living monkey. The fourfold association was broken up; only two of the firm remained; and they proceeded, heaven knows where, to carry on the business, while the remaining partners *slept*.

The corporation legislators had broken dreams, perhaps, when they heard the story.

A TALE OF

THE SEVENTEENTH CENTURY.

BY THE HON. G. C. GRANTLEY FITZHARDINGE BERKELEY.

DEDICATED BY THE AUTHOR, WITH THE HIGHEST ESTEEM AND RESPECT, TO THE LADIES FITZPATRICK.

In the third year of the reign of James the First, and at the hour of eight, during an evening in the latter part of the month of October, I must introduce my readers to the interior of a small but neat farm-house, situated on a little hill, commanding a view of the then not extensive village of Brigstock, in Northamptonshire; and upon the left hand of the road which runs from Grafton. In one corner of the room, and working at her needle by the light of a lamp, sat a very pretty and interesting — nay — absolutely beautiful girl; while in the middle of the apartment, a rude oaken table was spread with such homely viands as the house afforded; not forgetting a portly and capacious jug of nappy ale, a smoking can of elder wine, and the crackling comforts of a large wood fire. At the table, but with his back turned to it, and his face to the fire, seemingly impatient at the delay of his accustomed, and usually punctual meal, sat a very hearty and respectable-look-

ing old man, whose ruddy cheek and whitened head went far to prove that temperance and occupation are the best physicians; he had all the appearance of a farmer, but, at the same time, of one of those who had surmounted the difficulties of his situation. After an occasional impatient "Pshaw!" and a hearty kick or two bestowed upon his sheepdog, whom he designated by the name of Bob, and who every now and then solicited the commencement of supper, by thrusting his rough muzzle into his master's hand, the father of the pretty girl, for such he was, addressed her with the often-renewed question of—"Why, what can keep the boy so long?—I can't take things so coolly as you do, Mary;—there you sit as if you never wanted to eat again, working at the Lord knows what, or gazing upon that gold chain and locket which you *say* you found hanging to a hawthorn bough, in the forest!—Umph—I have been through the forest for many years, and never found such fruit on tree as that." Here he paused; and observing that his daughter still continued unmoved, he resumed—"How do you know, Mary, whether the delay which has taken place in the arrival of your brother and his men, may not proceed from some affray with the noted deer-stealer, of whom they talk so much, who strikes the venison whether in or out of season? Your brother, I say, may have come by the worst; but you care not."

"Hush, my dear father," said Mary, rising with the tear in her lovely eyes; "say not so: I mind not

the bantering which you and my brother bestow upon me regarding the chain and locket; but do not tax me with the want of affection."

"Well, well, dear!" (fondly patting her cheek, and kissing her forehead as she knelt by his side,) "I meant not what I said—but here they are."

At this moment the door opened, and the brother entered, a stout, fine young man, one of the keepers of the Farmingwoods Forest: and with him two of his assistants; one of whom had his head bandaged, and was otherwise covered with blood. They were all three apparently much heated with recent exertion; and the brother, as he flung himself into a chair, remarked, that he thought he should never have caught his wind again.—"But come, father, some drink; and you shall hear what has kept us from you so long: no squirrel-hunt, or locket-finding, (with an arch glance at Mary,) as you, I perceive, are ready to say, but a real job with the deer-stealers; ay, and with that one, too, of whom you have heard me speak, but to whom I have never been so close as I was this blessed evening. Well, you must know, father, (sighing as he placed the emptied horn upon the table,) we were out after the black Aver I told you of, that has three inches of fat, I know, upon his brisket, and who is the best venison of any upon my walk: and whilst we were creeping at him, having the wind of him, what little there was, the air shifted suddenly to the west, and he twigged us, pacing off slowly over

the great lawn towards the thicket on the other side. There he stopped for a moment, to gaze back upon the place where we were hid; and as he put up his nose to snuff the breeze, twang goes a cross-bow from the opposite side, and down he fell. Out from the brake whence the shot came dashed that very same gallant in green to whom I have before alluded; and, with a brace of long-dogs with him, he runs towards the deer: on we came at the same time; and we had each neared the venison before he was aware of our approach, so intent did he seem upon the spoil. When our eyes met, Halt! was the word with him; and, shouting to his dogs, he heads short back again for the thick wood. You know, father, that I can run?"

"Ay, boy, well, when any one is after thee!"

"Ay, and when I am after others. So, calling to Jack here, to let fly a bolt at him, I held on my course. Jack pulled up to take aim—shot, but missed his mark, though I saw the bolt whiz by his left ear; and on we ran. I kept on his line. Jack, when he had pulled, struck off to the right, and Will to the open track on the left, guessing that he would not hold his way through the thick wood, nor attempt to hide because of his dogs. Well, he entered Old Tree Hills, and struck into Blackthorn Copse; and here we thought, and rightly too, that we should house him. I catched a glimpse of his dogs as they ran in, and heard a pheasant crow, which he had put up;

and the blackbirds also made a devil of a clatter, for it was so late that they had come in to roost; and when I reached the place, I saw by his leap the exact spot where he had taken cover. By this time, Will had headed him; and Jack had got on the open greensward 'twixt the copse and the hills; so, calling out, 'Stand fast, boys!' in I went, taking care to keep my eyes about me. I had not been in above a minute, when I heard a rush, and Will calls out that he had catched him—*it*—he should have said; for, by the time Jack had got round, and I had forced my way through, there was Will stretched upon the grass, and with such a broken head as keeps him from his feed to-night; and such a one, as will serve to stop his jaw for a week at least. It was then dark, or nearly so, and we have never set eyes upon the poacher since; but, should we ever meet again, now that I have sent to the keepers of Rockingham Forest for their famous bloodhound, it shall go hard with me, but I give a better account of him, or my name's not Joe Trimmer. Speak, Will!—as thou canst not eat,—thou wert the nearest to him, as thy pate can testify, what sort of a chap was he?"

During the recital of this tale, the eyes of Mary had never once been turned upon the narrator; on the contrary, her work went on faster than ever, though more than once she drew from her pretty hand, with the point of her needle, a dark stain; but now, on this

direct question, she gazed scrutinisingly upon him to whom it was addressed.

"What sort of a chap," replied Will; why, let me see. In the first place, he is full six feet three, or may be more; and bigger round the waist than your father. I ought to know, as I had hold of him; and then, his legs—why, they are like young oak-trees; with a foot—ay, twice as big as mine,—and that's a good un for a mouse: and for his face, why, it is covered with red hair, and the fiercest I ever saw, barring the ould one-eyed mastiff at the ranger's lodge. And when he cursed me, which he heartily did, as he struck with the butt-end of his cross-bow, his voice was as hoarse as a buck's in October.

On hearing this reply, Mary's eyes fell again upon her work, which now went on with a far greater chance of utility than it did before. After a vast deal of conversation occasioned by the adventure, and after the ale-jug had been more than once replenished, the brother and his men rose to depart, and wishing Mary a good night, with a sarcastic caution to *take care of the locket*, they quitted the house.

Not long after the evening I have described, and past noon, on a clear, dry, and rather frosty 29th of October, I have again to present Mary to my readers. She was, at the moment I am speaking of, passing over the stepping-stones, which served as

a bridge across the shallow brook, which still murmurs in the close vicinity of the handsome and ancient village-church of Brigstock. The appearance of the stream then, was widely different from what it is now; yet, when nearly opposite to Catshead wood, it shakes off the contaminations of the village, and to this day retains its primitive purity; murmuring as gently, and beaming as brightly, through its green beds of water-cresses, as it did when the wild leader of the antlered herd used to soil himself from the heat of his blood in the deeper pools which the autumn floods had occasionally worn within its broken banks. It is necessary now to say more of Mary's appearance. She might have reached her nineteenth year; her figure tall and graceful, more so than her station in society would have led the observer to expect; and though the frequent exposure to the sun and wind might have tinged the rose upon her cheek with the slighest shade of brown, still it amounted to nothing more than the ripening hue upon the downy apricot, contrasting beautifully with the snowy whiteness of her swan-like neck and bosom.

At the time I speak of, the noble forests of Rockingham, Brigstock, and Farmingwoods, were as one; and the deer had free access to all the open pastures that then extended over the undulating country lying between Brigstock and Grafton. The character of the whole extent was wild and beautiful in the extreme, though always wanting that bold and lofty character

which alone exists in a more hilly or mountainous region.

But, to return to our heroine. Mary, in passing the church, looked long and wistfully at its time-worn portal. Entering the forest-path, she proceeded in the direction of Farmingwoods' lodge, then the ranger's residence, now the benevolent and hospitable mansion of the Ladies Fitz-Patrick; and in a short time reached the more sequestered and impervious thickets of the wood; when, her quick and anxious glance seemed to stray amid the reddened foliage of the trees for some expected object. At length, she paused beneath a large oak, that seemed to fling its arms abroad, as if in defiance of the storm, and listened attentively: not a sound met her ear save the hoarse cry of the buck, the occasional scream of the jay, or the shriller note of the large green woodpecker, mingled at times with the soft solitary song of the robin-red-breast, as it hopped within a yard of her upon the ground in timid curiosity. She had not long remained thus, when a low whistle met her ear, as of one who called upon a dog: and, either from its startling effect, or from some other cause, the colour came fresher and faster on her lovely face and neck than it had done before. In another moment, making a signal of restraint to two large deer-hounds who were at his heels, a tall young man stood before her.

His dress, clothed as he was from head to foot in green, might have been that of any person em-

ployed in the objects of the chase; but, from his bearing, soft, but occasionally flashing eye, and open forehead, any person might perceive that he came of a gentle line. In short, there was that about him, which in a strange place not only procured him the smile and prolonged observance of the village lasses whom he encountered, but even the unnurtured peasant yielded him, from instinct, that homage which he would have offered to an acknowledged superior. His countenance was remarkable for a mild but changeful expression; his person, tall and graceful, though athletic, was framed alike to figure in the stately minuet, and to hold his own in a bout at quarter-staff, or in the use of any other weapon on which the safety of his head depended; and the short curling chestnut hair that clung closely to his brow, with the unwrinkled smoothness of his cheek, alone interrupted by a light mustache, proclaimed his age to be about eight-and-twenty.

"Dearest Mary, this is too good of you," (advancing close up to her, and catching her in his arms, dropping at the same time a cross-bow, which he had previously held), "I hardly dared expect that you would have met me at this open hour of the day. My reason for urging you to come was, alas! that I have news, heavy news to impart, which had better reach your ear thus, than in any other way. I am summoned hence. Fear not, weep not, Mary; let not those lovely eyes grow dim with tears; 'tis but for a

short time, nay, but a few hours, and then, perchance, all will be well, and I shall return to the sweet wild wood, and to those dear scenes, and to that loveliness, which I know nowhere else but here."

"*Leave* this neighbourhood, Francis, and for a *short* time! To me, all hours alike are long that separate us: and this, before you have fulfilled that promise which alone can reconcile me to myself!" and, bursting into an agony of tears, she hid her face in his bosom.

"Weep not, Mary! you little know the cause that tears me hence; it is one to which I am bound, body and soul; that I have sworn, awfully sworn, to sustain with my wealth and with my life—*my* wealth, did I say? what has the fatal pledge left me that I can call my own? I am no longer master of my actions; life and soul are set upon a single cast, and I *dare* not now retreat. Even I, the last of my line, may be swept from the face of day in a cause which my heart tells me is wrong, but which I am fatally bound to espouse: our religion and the rights of conscience may call loudly for the fulfilment of our design, but yet I cannot look on Heaven and seek there for an approving witness. The intolerant bigotry of James I. drove me to league with those with whom I have embarked my fortune; and, by degrees, I have become pledged to crush the life of one, bound by the ties of wedlock to the only relative I have on earth.—But no —*he* shall *not* die; not even if the fate of our enterprise should hang upon the timely warning: I would

abide its downfal sooner than a hair of his honoured head should suffer; let him be saved, and I am reckless of the rest. Look at me, Mary, (for she had continued to sob upon his breast,) I am unknown here, even here, where best my lineage might be traced; a few years spent abroad, and one is soon forgotten. Thou knowest me only as thy Francis, others know me but as one madly bent on sylvan sport; and yet I have another and a nobler name, and a wilder game in view, as the numbered hours soon will testify. This blood upon my sleeve is but of the deer; it has stained thy dress—But hush—that sound!"

The deep tongue of a bloodhound was now heard approaching the place where they stood, with the encouraging cheer of men, who seemed to be following close upon his track.

"Mary, dearest Mary! I must leave thee.—Those sounds! (pointing in the direction of the bloodhound, whose heavy and redoubled tongue was nearing them fast,) I may not abide; there is more in them than brings safety to me: one week from this time, and at five in the afternoon, meet me at the Bocase Tree; I will then join thee, never to part again."

Thus saying, and snatching up his cross-bow, he dashed through the thicket in an opposite direction from that in which the cause of alarm proceeded, and was soon out of sight. Close, and closer still, the deep-mouthed hound advanced, till his long lashing stern, tinged at its tapering point with blood, and his broad, glossy, black back, could be seen glancing to

and fro among the growing fern. At length he appeared in the open space near the oak, his tanned and sweeping lips trailing in quest upon the tainted turf; then, suddenly raising his head, he dashed forward, and at a bound seized and overthrew the terrified and fainting girl. In a moment, she was rescued from her perilous situation, the hound having only fastened on her dress, and her wondering brother with his assistants stood before her.

"Speak! Mary, speak! which way has he gone—him—the man we spoke of at my father's house, and whom Will has so faithfully described, has he—has he passed this way?"

A thousand thoughts in a moment rushed upon her mind; but, with that readiness in the hour of danger which is so often the attribute of woman, she instantly replied, "No—I have not *seen him;* no *such person so described can* have passed this way?"

"Here, Chaunter!" said the owner of the hound, "try round, old boy!"—Strange; I would have sworn that thou hadst checked at nothing save the blood of the slaughtered deer, or the foil of some strange dog."

But no; the hound, after a cast about the oak, returned, and would again have flown on Mary.

Her brother, now losing his temper at the check his pursuit had met with, desired her to return home; and, with angry sneer, asked her, whether she was looking for any more lockets? then, speeding away in a wider

circle down the wind, she again heard them loudly but slowly resume the line of scent; and they were soon out of reach of all further observation.

When she was left alone, and, in her way home, had time to recall the circumstances that had passed so hurriedly, the bitterness of the truth came full upon her mind: her lover, he, on whom was centred every hope she had in the world, was a lawless deer-stealer. Hitherto, she had believed him to be one who, with all due license, had hunted for his own amusement; but now, it seemed, though the person the under-keeper described was widely different from her lover, that circumstances went far to prove that they were one and the same. She looked for the blood upon her dress, now in anxious fear that that might betray her secret; but the hound had torn the stain away, and, in the hurry of the moment, her brother had not observed it. Tears,—tears, the solace of many a weary heart, now came to her relief; and, wondering what great event could call her lover from the forest, and the signification of his mysterious intimations, she reached her home.

The time has arrived when we must transport our readers to Liveden new build, an unfinished house; then, as now, partaking of the Elizabethan style, and built in the shape of a cross. It was commenced, and left unfinished, by Sir Thomas Tresham, who died in 1604 or –5; abandoned, it is supposed, on account of the persecution of the Catholics; and is, to this mo-

ment, an extraordinary object for the inspection of the curious, and no unapt illustration of the vain, fickle, and perishable nature of the intention of man. A line of white gates through the Farmingwoods' demesne, put up and painted purposely to direct those who would seek the building, will (from the kind attention of the owners of the property) point the stranger's way to the object he has in view.

It was now past the earlier hours of the night, and a red and flickering light, proceeding from a newly made fire in what was intended for the kitchen chimney, threw an unusual and uncertain glare upon its roofless walls. A flask or two of wine were also near the fire; and there were evident preparations for the broiling some food upon the embers. Close by the burning brands, and warming themselves, though occasionally shading their eyes from the glare of the fire, and looking anxiously to the southern entrance of the apartment, sat two men. One of them, who seemed to take the lead, was perhaps a little above the middle size; and, though he had laid aside his long sword, he still retained about his person weapons of both an offensive and defensive description. He had passed the middle age; yet, his well-formed limbs were still capable of every exertion, while his face bespoke a large share of resolution, mingled with a gloomy and anxious expression; and care, rather than years, had tinged considerably with grey that portion of his otherwise dark hair which the close confines of a steel headpiece suffered to be visible. His companion might

have been a year or two younger; and, save that he was carefully armed, there was nothing remarkable in his appearance beyond a thick bushy pair of eyebrows overshadowing a common set of features, whose expression, if they had any, was that of a dogged and sullen disposition. A step in the outer portion of the building was now heard; the hands of the personages we have described instinctively clutched their weapons; and at the same instant Francis, in his sylvan dress, stood before them.

"How now, Catesby!" said he, addressing the one we have the more particularly described; and, holding out his hand to the other; "before, rather than after, your time, as usual."

But Catesby, making a sign of caution, motioned to him a seat by his side at the fire, saying at the same time, sarcastically, "Must I do the honours of your house for you? It is a goodly sign of the persecution of the true Catholics, and, consequently, the fitter place for the redressers of their wrongs to take counsel in. Even hadst thou not had this masquerading fit upon thee, thou couldst not have received me in so fit a place, not even at thy goodly manor of Rushden; for, I am of the Douglas opinion, and, on matters of importance, I would sooner hear the lark sing than the mouse squeak: nay, would rather listen to that owl which now hoots above our heads and o'er the desolation of thy house, than to the choicest linnet that ever owned a cage. But come, my comrades in a glorious cause! it is not the first time that we have counselled

in the open air: Essex's failure is still fresh upon our minds; and as we were foiled then, so have we now the likelier chance to win."

They then commenced their repast; and though there was an evident wish on the part of Catesby to do away with all restraint, and as palpable a one with Tresham, to whom we must now give his real name, to be at his ease, still there was a coolness that neither wine nor warmth had power to drive away.

At length a peculiar whistle at the door, and then an approaching step, were heard, both of which appeared well known to Catesby; and an armed retainer, in the dress of a newly raised regiment of horse, entered the place.

"What now, Tom! is all right in Lady Wood!"

"Yes, sir," was the concise reply; and the man again retired.

Catesby, then drawing closer to Tresham, thus opened his business:—"I have come to tell thee all is prepared; our plans perfected; and our friends firm at their posts: but still we want money—more we must have; and to thee I come for the sinews of war. In this paper, thou wilt read the sums required: do so, and let me see thee consign it to the flames."

Tresham read: and, as the light played upon his countenance, Catesby watched its changeful expression. When he remarked a trace of hesitation or doubt, a frown passed over his own determined brow, and his hand seemed inclined to seek the hil tof a pon-

iard that peeped from beneath his vest. Tresham suddenly looked up from the paper; and his glance for a moment met, and quailed beneath, the searching gaze of his companion: it was but for a moment.

"Catesby, I cannot comply with these terms unless I have more time: to raise such a sum immediately would be impossible: neither do I see, nor can I consent to, the necessity of the indiscriminate slaughter you propose. One there is whose life I value more than my own, and he must and shall be saved: that one, a staunch Catholic, the Lord Mounteagle, has wedded my only sister; and to him, in other respects, am I deeply indebted. Nay, Catesby, frown not: I tell thee here alone, and at the dead of night, with thine armed companions, be they many or be they few, to back thee in thy violence, that, sooner than injure one hair of his honoured head, I would consent to suffer the varied torments of the rack! He *shall* be safe, or I stir not another foot."

"Stay," said Catesby, impetuously interrupting him; "thou hast called our project cruel; but hast thou compared it with the dreadful atrocities practised against the Catholics?—has thou reckoned up the numbers that have been butchered by the bloody knife of the common executioner, and the hundreds that have perished in the miserable and squalid privations of their gloomy prisons; ay, and the thousands that have been reduced from affluence and ease to the lowest state of want and beggary? If thou hast, ask

thyself to whom the charge of cruelty best can be applied?"

"Catesby, I grant you the wrongs, but I hesitate at the means of retribution. Thou knowest the words—Vengeance is mine alone: should not the redress of wrongs come from a higher hand than thine?"

"Now, Tresham, by my soul thou dost o'erstep the bounds of all patience, and dost lay far short, in resolution, of the most whining and pitiful priest. It is to thee, and such as thee, that we owe our present calamities: it is this damnable doctrine of non-resistance that makes us slaves! No authority of priest or pontiff can deprive man of his right to repel injustice: and it were better that our limbs were nipped and cramped with the bitterest chains, than that the freedom of conscience should be fettered. Oh, Tresham! I did not expect such a sentiment from thee. Hast thou no spirit? Is the fire dead within thee, that the wrongs of thy religion can find no fuel, no refuge, in thy breast? or, dost thou, a craven, quail before the great revenge those wrongs have conjured forth? Look above thee! Why hath thy house no roof? Why are the holy signs that range along its site left wide and incomplete? Doth not the chilling echo of these empty walls speak volumes to thy heart; and every vacant niche, where should have stood some saint or symbol of our faith, cry out aloud for rite and reformation? Ay, Tresham, they *do* cry, and thou *hast* heard their call, spite of thy masquerading folly. Look on my hands—discoloured, scarred, and broken with

their toil: I have wrought like a galley slave, in darkness, while men above enjoyed the glorious light and air of heaven; yet would I not retract one hour of that blessed work for all the bliss of light and life, could I but see the confirmation of my hope."

Here, Catesby, suddenly changing the manner and tone of his speech, and fixing his keen eyes full on the face of Tresham, (while Winter, which was the name of his companion, clutching his dagger, drew rather in the rear of the parties,) exclaimed, in concentrated accents of the deepest feeling, yet sternly and imperiously, "What, sir, doth that man deserve who, for the safety of *one* life, would sell his God, his country, and the lives of his allies? Ay," said he, suddenly confronting Tresham, and, at the same time, half unsheathing his sword, "what would *he* deserve who, by any indirect measure, even endangered such a cause as this?"

Tresham quailed not beneath his scrutinising gaze; nor did he seem dismayed at the startling and unexpected question. Looking full upon Catesby, he steadily answered—"*Death!*"

"Hast *thou* not written to Mounteagle? Winter has seen a letter, without name or date, warning him of danger."

This was said with startling vehemence, calculated to detect a shadow of falsehood; but, on Tresham it had no apparent effect.

"I have *not* written such a letter; nay, more, the man who deems me capable of the act, or, so deeming,

confesses it not openly to my face, is one in whose false blood I would write the foulness of his suspicion, were he placed within my reach!

Winter here stepped more in front of Tresham, and thus addressed him:—

"The letter Catesby mentions, *I* have seen! It was in a disguised character; and, to your teeth, I say that there was a peculiar quaintness in some of the letters more resembling thy hand than any I have seen before: nay, frown not, nor lay hands upon thy sword; the subject hath a wound which shall be probed. Hast thou had communication by letter or otherwise, directly or indirectly, with any one in London since we saw thee last?"

"No—by my life, I have not!"

"But thou hast been in town?"

"I have; but what of that? Away with these implied suspicions! I will not be questioned like a hind who steals his master's corn! If thou hast aught to bring against me, speak! If thou hast proof to damn me, show it! But to thy face I tell thee, Catesby, and to thine—he—they lie most foully in their throats, who brand me with a bare suspicion!"

Catesby here held out his hand.

"Tresham, I believe thee. Winter, let it pass; I now look upon the letter thou hast seen as nothing more than one of those harebrained forgeries that every public man is liable to receive from an oppressed and feverish population. Suspicion attaches not to us, otherwise that letter had not been shown by Lord Mounteagle's

confidential secretary to one of our party: let the subject drop, and now to duty: still shall the trusty Fawkes have his wish; back shall the Scottish beggars to their barren hills, and England's wrongs be scattered in the air. Come, Tresham! we must to town together —we cannot do without thee; our steeds are in the adjoining wood, and relays wait us on the road:" and, as they left Tresham for a moment to look upon the night, Catesby remarked to Winter, in an under tone, "Had his eye quailed beneath my glance, or had he in his bearing betrayed aught that could have confirmed suspicion, I had given thee the signal for his death; as it was, it went against my soul to slay him on such vague approof."

"Well," said Winter, "I do not differ with thee, and Heaven send we are not mistaking in our mercy."

Every thing being in readiness, they now called forth Tresham, and the three proceeded on their road to London.

We must take the liberty, upon the evening of the fourth of November, of transporting our readers to a handsome country house, in the immediate vicinity of London, the interior of which was furnished in a costly style of elegance, and the supper-table laid out with ample and luxurious preparation. By the fire, in an easy-chair, and busied with the publications of the day, sat a handsome, middle-aged man. A servant entered the room and presented to his master, on a silver salver, a letter.

"From whom?"

"I know not, my lord."

"How, sirrah?"

"It was left, my lord, by a tall man wrapped in a cloak, with his hat pulled down upon his face, and who refused to give his name, but desired that the letter might immediately reach your hands."

The servant retired, and Lord Mounteagle looked at the superscription: it was directed, "for his honoured hands:" and, muttering something of the same disguised character as before, he broke the sealed thread that bound it, and read the contents aloud, which whatever the former communication might have been, now consisted of but one line:—

"*Thou hast heard—and life is thine, to lose or to enjoy.* Thanks, my anxious, though anonymous correspondent: think not thy former warning was in vain; all is cared for, and we wait the result."

So early as four o'clock on the following morning, Lord Mounteagle, who had made no preparations for retiring to rest, was summoned by a royal messenger, to attend the king in council.

Without dwelling on circumstances that are too well known to merit further description, we must now wend our way back to the forest.

It was on the 6th of November, on an afternoon, which had set in with a dark and lowering sky, the wind blowing in gusts, that Mary was seen, with her cloak wrapped around her, proceeding through the Farmingwoods Forest by a path which now leads by

the steward's house belonging to the hall. Her step was hurried; and she frequently started as the deer crossed her path, or bounded sudden from the low bushes where they were browsing in search of the acorns that had fallen from the trees. Once or twice as she looked anxiously around, she thought she saw the figure of a man, who seemed to be following her; but the glimpse she had was so uncertain, and as it was then growing dark, she supposed she must have been deceived by the waving of some forest bough, and she continued on her way.

At length, she reached an unusually large and hollow old oak-tree, called, from a tradition which is current to this moment, the Bocase Tree; having derived its name from the reputed fact of Robin Hood, in one of his lengthened wanderings in search of spoliation in the king's forests, having hidden his bow and arms in its cavity, until the ranger, who suddenly appeared in the vicinity, had passed. The huge and gnarled roots of the tree wound themselves on the ground like monstrous serpents; and upon one of these she seated herself. Darkness was fast approaching, and the pheasants might be heard crowing as they sought, and more than usually, the lowest boughs of the thickest trees on the side most sheltered from the wind. Flocks of woodpigeons, though scattered, wheeled round in different directions; and the wild cry of the carrion-crows, mingled with the hoarser croak of the raven, met her ear, as if the feathered race were aware of some approaching event

which boded any thing but peace and rest. The wind continued to blow at intervals; and then, for a few moments, it would be entirely calm, though still the dark and drifting clouds above swept hurrying by, as if there was no cessation of the tempestuous current. As she sat observing the wildness of the evening, and fearfully watching the indications of an approaching storm, which she was too much used to the forest not to remark, a startled herd of deer came bounding by her, and, in the same direction, the figures of three horsemen were seen approaching through the gloom. She instinctively drew within the hollow of the tree; and when within fifty yards, the horsemen halted, and one of them dismounting, though still wrapped in his cloak, approached the spot where she was. *Long*, however, before his face or even his figure could be recognised, a something within, which passeth all understanding, save that of true love, assured her that it was Tresham. In another instant she was in his arms.

"Once more, dearest Mary, I hold you to my breast, to part, I trust no more. This evening seals our fate; every pledge that I have ever made you, shall be redeemed; but, time must not be trifled with—we must fly to a foreign shore."

"Nay, but Francis, what need is there for flight? if bound by the holy vow, what need of concealment? My father cannot, but give us his blessing, and must be honoured by the connexion of one whose manners show that he is of a rank superior to ours. Where—

where can I be so happy as near the declining years of my sire?"

While she was speaking, the wind had for a short space been hushed; but suddenly, from the furthest verge of the forest, a roar, like that of the mighty waters of a distant ocean, came upon their ear. Nearer and nearer swept the coming storm, till the whole forest bent before the blast; boughs torn from the trunks themselves came sweeping by; and every instant the crash of the falling timber shook the earth with appalling violence. The night assumed a pitchy darkness, rendered still more awfully visible by the occasional flashes of lightning which shot athwart the troubled sky. Mary, in terror, clung to her lover for support; and as they leant against the inner surface of the hollow tree, which at present shielded them from the blast, they could feel its rugged bark bend to and fro before the fury of the tempest, and its roots absolutely heave the ground in which it stood.

At this moment, an exclamation of horror from Tresham, as he felt the very roots themselves start beneath his feet, recalled Mary to a further sense of her danger; and the next, clasping her in his arms, he bore her forth before the raging wind, and placed her on the sheltered side of a rising bank, that at least offered no danger from the trees above. The oak they had that instant left, like some huge monster of the deep, when it feels the first deadly thrust of the harpoon, writhed as if in mortal agony; and

then, as its shivering limbs, joining the roar of the surrounding forest, seemed to shriek above the storm, with one monstrous throe, its roots rending the earth asunder, and casting the mould and moss high in the murky air, the whole tree fell thundering to the ground. As if appeased by its triumph over the king of the forest, that for centuries had braved alike the electric fluid and the fury of the winds, the storm now abated; but with the transient light of the young moon, the dark figures of several men were seen approaching the bank, where the lovers were, and in such a manner that the chance of remaining unobserved seemed impossible. Tresham whispered—"Mary, these are not my men, and there are odds against me; but, once upon my steed, and hence, by other means, to London; my ship, now lying in the Thames, should bear us where no foe could interrupt our happiness."

Saying thus, he stood firm before her and drew his sword, yet stirred not a foot, in the vain hope that they might yet be passed unseen. At the same time he was observed by the leader of the opposite party; and, as they called upon him to surrender, he from a silver whistle at his breast, gave a signal to his own attendants. At once he was surrounded and attacked —Mary fell fainting to the ground, and more than once the steps of the assailed and the assailing passed over her. Well and gallantly did Tresham defend himself; one foe had already fallen, and he had broken ground in the direction of the galloping sound of ap-

proaching hoofs. His servants came, but proved of little avail; they were only two in number, while his assailants still made five; yet from their complete appointments, they might, by chance, have turned the tide of battle, had not the horse of one of them run foul of, and fallen over, a limb of the uprooted tree, and in the act severely disabled his rider; the other was soon cut down, encumbered as he was with a led horse; and Tresham, after a determined resistance, being severely wounded, was at length overpowered and made prisoner.

"Haste," said the leader of the party, "to the ranger's lodge; there let us first secure our prisoner; these forests are no safe place, and there may be more company in them yet than we would like to see."

Tresham maintained a determined silence till arrived within the lodge, where he first discovered that he had fallen into the hands of the head constable of Westminster.

"I need not ask," he said haughtily, "upon what authority you have thus arrested me—another persecution on the score of conscience?"

He hesitated as he concluded the question; and either from loss of blood, or some other cause, there was a slight tremulousness of lip and manner.

"No score of conscience, sir," was the stern reply; "but on a charge of high treason—as one of the conspirators of the damnable popish plot, discovered and frustrated on the night of yesterday."

"How!—frustrated, sayest thou—the Lord Mounteagle, is he safe?"

"He is, sir, and, by a timely letter from an unknown hand, all have been saved from the hellish scheme that would have hurled the pride of England to eternity!"

"Thank God!" escaped the lips of the prisoner; but so faintly was it said, that those who heard it scarce could be assured that their ears had not deceived them.

Some time now elapsed in placing the state-prisoner in a room of sufficient security, and on dressing the wounds received on either side; and, when all had been arranged and settled, then, for the first time, they missed one of their party.

"How!" exclaimed Jack, the under-keeper, with whom we have been previously acquainted; "s'death!—where is Trimmer? he was with us; he gave the first information to the officer as to where we were to beat up our game; and though the night was as dark as a tan-pit, yet I'll swear he was the first to make in upon our man."

This was soon communicated to the ranger, who, calling some of his men, immediately set off in search of the head-keeper. Some hours had elapsed during the occurrence of these events, the night had passed, and the grey light of morning was become visible in the east, and a calm had succeeded the hurricane, as if nature, exhausted with her previous exertion, had sunk into a deep and death-like sleep. The forest was

stripped bare of every lingering vestige of its summer hue; and the scathed and scattered limbs of its withered pride, bore ample testimony to the violence of the tempest. Here, lay an uprooted tree; there, the ghastly looking trunk of one possessed of but half its former height, having been rent asunder like the mast of some wrecked vessel.

The party now passed up the avenue of witchelms, crossed the open lawn of the forest, and by the time they were within a few hundred yards of the place they sought, it was sufficiently light to remark objects. All was as still as death; and though it was now dry and clear over head, the storm had concluded with rain; and the red and angry looking sun began to gild the large and pendent drops of moisture that still hung upon the underwood, on the bright red berries of the hawthorn, and upon the deeper bloom of the clustering sloes. As they approached the spot where they should first have seen the wide-spreading and lofty head of the bocase-tree, the ranger, who was in front, paused, and pointing to a tall, bare, and whitened limb, the topmost point of a large dead tree, that reared its spectral shape far above the surrounding forest, he remarked—"Why, surely the blighted maple ought not to be seen from this spot; but yonder it is with a solitary raven perched on its highest bough, as if he were watching the carcass of something below."

They all looked that way, and hastened on with a species of awe for which they could scarcely account. At a turn of the forest, where now stands a lonely

shed, and one of the gates of the present Farmingwoods Park, they came immediately upon the scene of the arrest of Tresham, of the violence of the storm, and of the mischief of man. The first object that presented itself was the uprooted trunk of a huge tree; its mighty arms scattered, broken, and, in some places, driven deep into the earth, bore testimony to the extent and violence of its fall; and within its boughs, cast and entangled, lay the prostrate body of a goodly steed, whose struggles seemed well nigh over. Grazing at a little distance, amid the stunted thorns and pollard ashes that had been lopped for the brousings of the deer, and as if loath to leave his companion, was another horse, his saddle turned beneath him, and the reins of his bridle entangled under his feet; while the body of him who seemed to have been his rider, and whose military appearance bespoke him of one of the newly raised regiments of the time, lay within a few yards. Beyond this painful spectacle, and beneath a gently rising bank, another sight presented itself, which touched the heart of the most reckless of the party with pity. Poor Mary!—her long, fair, and dishevelled hair almost completely concealing her face, and descending down her neck and shoulders till its moistened clusters fell upon the pale features of one that lay beneath her, her left hand resting on the earth for support, and the other placed upon her brother's breast, cold, and motionless, and every garment drenched with rain—she looked the very personification of grief.

At first they thought that life had passed away, but

on touching her, a slight motion was observable in her lips; and even her brother, whose wounds, inferring from the ensanguined state of her hands, she had evidently felt for during the night, and tried to stanch, also showed some signs of existence. Restoratives were instantly resorted to; and the strong horse caught, mounted, and sent for assistance, while the rest of the party hastily constructed a species of litter, with the fallen boughs of the tree, and bore their melancholy burden to the lodge.

But little more remains to be said. Francis Tresham, the last of the male line of his race, ere he was aware that Mary was under the same roof with him, guarded by a strong escort, was hurried to the tower, where, from close confinement and the severity of his wound, the seeds of sickness were sown, which soon after terminated his existence.

Mary and her wounded relative both recovered; but, from the night which we have described, she was never seen to smile again. She would sit for hour after hour, gazing on the chain and locket which she always wore around her neck; but, she never alluded to the past events, (and which, from a feeling of delicacy, were also avoided by her family,) save once, when, after a long and melancholy silence, she abruptly addressed her brother, to ask him how they had gained intelligence that *he* (meaning Tresham) was to have been present on the spot, where he was captured. He replied, that ever after the occurrence with the bloodhound he had had his suspicions, and therefore

had watched her on the eventful evening to the appointed place; had encountered by chance the officers of justice, who had followed Tresham from London, to whom he communicated his conjectures that they each were after one and the same person.

The site of this occurrence, and the very spot where the bocase-tree once stood, is to this day marked by a rude stone, mentioned in 1643 as the boundary of the forest, and still observed for the same purpose: on the stone is engraved the following inscription—"On this place, grew the Bocase Tree."

CAROLINE WILLIAMS;

OR,

MOTIVES AND DISAPPOINTMENTS.

BY R. BERNAL, ESQ. M. P.

No entertainment could have been more splendid, according to modern taste and phraseology, than the ball at Lady Mary Bladen's mansion, in Grosvenor Square. The apartments were brilliantly lighted, the supper was profuse and costly, the heat oppressive, and the throng of company so great, that many of the fair visitors fainted from pleasure and fatigue, and few were able to reach the refreshment-tables, to which the men fought their way with difficulty. In short, every thing was well arranged, and exceedingly delightful.

This matter formed the subject of conversation on the following day, between Digby Travers and Harry Dighton, two gentlemen well known in the gay circles of London.

TRAVERS.—"Well, Dighton, what did you think of the turn-out last light?"

DIGHTON.—"Oh, just like all Lady Mary Bladen's former doings, a menagerie collected from every part

of the globe—lions, bears, monkeys, staring with surprise at each other."

Travers.—"You must allow, however, that no expense was spared: abundant refreshments; magnificent supper!"

Dighton.—"I do not allow any such thing. The champagne was detestable, the pine-apples were musty, the ponche a-la-Romaine was merely rum-punch iced, the grapes were"—

Travers.—"Sour. But, Dighton, you are always fastidious and difficult; surely there were some very charming and well-dressed women."

Dighton.—"Pooh! what has that to do with the supper? Besides, I am certain that one half of the company never met the other before. The most incongruous mixture of presentable and anonymous persons. Lady Mary must have had a regular *battue* in all the decent streets north and east of Oxford Street."

Travers.—"Still, you know every body. Who was that beautiful girl in the fancy costume of an Andalusian peasant, upon whom every eye was turned with admiration?"

Dighton.—"Defend me from all knowledge, heraldic, genealogical, or statistical, of the tribes of Tomkins, Wilkins, Smiths, &c.! I can only inform you, that this goddess in human attire, is a Miss Williams, reported to be the possessor of a large fortune, and under the protection of some one Mrs. Townsend—a widow. They are both almost unknown in town. No one, except such a lion huntress as Lady Mary Bladen, would ever have discovered them."

Dighton's information, although scanty, was correct. The fair object of his friend's admiration, Caroline Williams, did reside with, or under the protection and care of, Mrs. Townsend; and it was equally true, that until the commencement of the season, neither of the two ladies had been a denizen of the fashionable world. Common rumour assigned the advantages of a very considerable fortune to Miss Williams; and those who had the felicity of her acquaintance, allowed, that over and above the possession of extraordinary beauty, the young lady was eminently distinguished for graceful manners and superior accomplishments. Mrs. Townsend maintained a liberal establishment in a visitable quarter of London, and appeared on all occasions ready, and even anxious, to mix in the usual routine and recreations of good society. Moreover, she gave excellent dinners; and with the addition of such attractions as were ostensibly and conjecturally united in the person of her lovely charge, it was not a matter of wonder, that a host of acquaintances and *soi-disant* friends were soon and easily formed.

The precise nature of the connexion existing between the ladies was not clear. Mrs. Townsend was generally believed to be the widow of a physician; but, although the intercourse was most intimate, no very near degree of relationship appeared to exist between her and Miss Williams. Many speculated, some inquired, and few really cared whence the ladies came, who they were, or what was their origin: but all were solicitous to ascertain if the fortune, which

fame allotted to the younger, were absolutely within her own control, or were dependent upon that of the elder.

As far as it could be discovered, it seemed nearly certain, that on her attaining the age of 21 years, Miss Williams would be entitled to at least 80,000*l*. So that, while rumour, conjecture, and gossip, travelled through all the four quarters of the earth, to fix upon a suitable birth-place and stock of ancestry for the handsome Caroline, there was no dearth of gay and gallant admirers, chivalric enough, to be prepared without any hesitation or scruple as to pedigree, or education, for adventuring upon such a mine of wealth and impersonation of loveliness.

To any gentleman of acknowledged birth and station, and moving in fashionable society, there was no difficulty in obtaining an introduction to Mrs. Townsend's house. Digby Travers, himself one of the younger branches of a noble family, and a member of the exclusive circles of London, found an early opportunity of being presented to Mrs. Townsend. Invitations followed; and in a short period he was admitted and installed as one of the regular intimates of the family. Digby Travers was elegant and handsome, of amiable disposition, and keenly alive to honourable and manly feelings. At the same time, he was not entirely free from some defects often inherent in his class, no slight tincture of strong aristocratical opinions and prejudices; and with a pretty sufficient leaven of thoughtlessness and extravagance as to habits and ex-

pense. It was generally whispered that Travers was greatly embarrassed in his pecuniary resources; and it was as generally inferred, that Miss Williams's fortune was no improvident speculation for a man in his circumstances.

Be it as it might, Travers found the way of making himself always agreeable, and a welcome guest with his new acquaintances: he introduced his several noble and condescending female relatives to the ladies; and, ere long, he was considered, and envied, as being an admirer of Miss Williams, and as having, in prospect, a very fair chance of promotion. In truth, Caroline's brilliant eyes had quickly penetrated the inmost recesses of his breast, despite of the adamantine and polished surface by which the hearts of most young men of fashion are so well protected. Travers did not attempt to disguise his sentiments; he looked, and sighed,—doubted, and hoped, in succession, through all the seven days of the week: and if a reciprocity of feeling was not so decidedly manifested by Caroline, still his attentions were well received and never repelled.

But let it not be supposed that Travers was so fortunate as to have the field exclusively to himself. Amongst the numerous rivals who were on the *qui vive* to dispute every inch in the advance towards the favour of the fair lady, there was a certain Captain Miller, whose claims or pretensions were rather formidable. He was older than Travers, of steady and irreproachable habits and character, and possessing considerable

abilities and acquirements. His person was by no means unpleasing; and his conversation and demeanour were particularly mild and agreeable. Captain Miller had also the advantage of a long and intimate acquaintance with Mrs. Townsend, and of being a frequent visitor at the house; so frequent, indeed, as to occasion thereby no little annoyance to Travers.

It was evident that Mrs. Townsend held considerable influence over her beautiful charge, and that Miss Williams paid ready attention and deference to the suggestions and advice of the widow on most occasions. Travers felt persuaded that the acquisition of Mrs. Townsend's good opinion would be an additional passport to the favour of Caroline; and, under such persuasion, he did every thing in his power to attain his purpose, as a man in his position, deeply in debt and deeply in love, would be likely to do, with a beautiful girl and a large fortune as the objects in perspective.

Miss Williams dispensed her smiles of approbation, at first, very impartially between the two candidates. They were both acknowledged favourites, and, to all appearance, contesting a neck and neck race. It would be a difficult attempt to fathom all the minor and hidden currents which agitate the female mind under such circumstances. Perhaps the conjecture may be hazarded, that the advantages which the more winning and elegant manners, and his position in distinguished society, conferred upon Travers, were somewhat balanced by the doubts and fears which his known extra-

vagance and past follies had engendered. At all events, the advice and opinion of Mrs. Townsend, in that state of things, might have tended to turn the scale either side.

The latter lady for some time fluctuated; very possibly, from old acquaintance or other trivial causes, her direct predilection would have inclined towards the captain; but the widow had in reserve a large stock of reasons and motives, from which she drew, as the occasion required, a sufficiency to guide her conduct and actions. Mrs. Townsend was a devoted admirer of high rank and connexions, an unblushing votary of the powers who gave tone and character to fashionable life. To obtain a portion of the glare and sunshine of their pre-eminence, she would have sacrificed much; and to the titled and high-flying relatives and family of Travers she eagerly looked for future gratifications, which she never could expect to result from any intercourse with the more humble family of Captain Miller.

Thus affairs came to a crisis; and although the visits of the Captain were still permitted and welcomed in a kind and friendly manner, yet the widow's fiat having been pronounced, that of her lovely charge soon followed; and Digby Travers was openly received as the happy and successful admirer. Miller concealed his vexation and disappointment as well as it was possible to do; and by his quiet and inoffensive conduct, seemed desirous of putting in a claim to be considered as a friend, when compelled to abandon the character of a lover.

"The course of *true* love never did run smooth."

It would be a waste of time to digress into a dissertation upon what constitutes *true* love. Would it not be better, once for all, to alter the quotation generally, and to omit the adjective, leaving the substantive to individual interpretation and imagination? The stream of transport, delight, and affection, does not flow undisturbed in our narrative.

When the suit unremittingly paid by Travers to his kind mistress had attained that period of maturity, at which, *selon les regles*, in these unromantic, but real times, it became discreet, if not necessary, to enter on matters of dry fact and business, the fair Caroline naturally referred her acquiescing lover to Mrs. Townsend. In a long conference with that lady, Travers was surprised, and not displeased to learn, that the young lady's fortune exceeded in amount what common report had stated, and that it was entirely within her own disposal. Mrs. Townsend rather obscurely or evasively alluded to the circumstance of Caroline having been deprived of her parents at a very early age; and of her having been left under her care and protection. She spoke of her attachment to, and her anxiety for, the happiness of her fair ward; and hinted pretty plainly that in the event of the marriage of Miss Williams, she did not by any means expect to be separated from her. Now Travers was not deficient in penetration. Former suspicions on his part were fully confirmed by the broad hints, and clear declarations, which he received in the progress of his conversation with the widow. Mrs. Townsend was warmly attached to the good things of

this life; to the benefit of a large income. The conduct and government of a well-ordered mansion and establishment; and to the retaining of that position in society, to which she had been accidentally advanced by such powerful auxiliaries.

Mrs. Townsend's own pecuniary means were limited. It was of the last importance that she should make every effort to preserve her situation and ascendency over her lovely charge hereafter, and, depending mainly on the influence established by long habit over the mind and kind feelings of Caroline, Mrs. Townsend little doubted but that Digby Travers would assent to any stipulation, or secret condition, which would secure to himself her co-operation and good offices.

But the widow's calculations in this instance were erroneous. Travers was not in love with Mrs. Townsend; his aristocratical notions had rather prepossessed him against her: he imagined, that under the disguise of affected good humour there was a decided original taint of vulgarity and pretension. He had no idea of having his future *menage* burdened with a third party, whose anomalous situation could neither add advantage nor respectability. While he was on the first step of his advancement, it was politic to treat the widow with all becoming deference; but now that he was master (as he believed) of the affections of Miss Williams, the case was entirely altered.

The result was, that the conference between Mrs. Townsend and Travers terminated abruptly: the lady being unable to conceal her anger and vexation; and

the gentleman fully convinced that she was a forward, ill-bred, and disagreeable woman.

However, this *brouillerie* did not appear to interrupt the ordinary progress of matters. The lovers met as usual. Occasionally, to be sure, Travers surprised his fair mistress in tears; and he naturally ascribed her apparent dejection to the communication, which had no doubt been made by Mrs. Townsend, of the conversation, with sundry improvements and comments. Whenever Travers expressed his apprehensions, that his distaste to the future encumbrance of the widow might be the cause of the uneasiness of the lovely Caroline, she strenuously denied the fact; but evaded altogether confiding in him the source of her agitation.

Time flew on; and the day which had been fixed for the celebration of the nuptials of the lovers was rapidly approaching. For some few days previously there had been long and repeated conversations between Caroline and her female friend. The subject thereof had been one of interest. It would appear that Mrs. Townsend had been urging upon the young lady the adoption of advice, which the latter had not been so ready to follow; and, whatever it might have been, the effect was visible in the pale and depressed countenance of Miss Williams.

Perhaps the tears, sighs, and smiles of lovers are necessary and desirable, as tending to vary the monotony of the season of courtship. As the appointed time drew nigh, Caroline became composed and cheerful. On the evening of the Tuesday (the marriage was to

take place on the Thursday), Caroline had been engaged in private conference with the widow: when it was finished, Caroline, who had previously arranged to go to the Opera, excused herself, and retired to her own apartment; where, after much reflection and indecision, she was intently occupied in writing. She arose from her occupation, satisfied with the result of some mental decision. The satisfaction and comparative contentment of her mind were indicated by the placid smile which played over her beautiful face, as she stood for a few moments absorbed in thought. The letter she had written was folded, and, without farther hesitation, sealed and addressed to her lover.

On the following Wednesday, Digby Travers had called at an early hour; having matters of business to transact in the country, at a short distance from the metropolis, he would not be able to pay his devoirs before the next morning, which was fixed for the nuptials. For some reason or other, Caroline's decision and courage appeared to have suddenly forsaken her; and she suffered her lover to take his leave without delivering her letter to him. After his departure, Miss Williams sent the epistle to his lodgings.

Thursday, the eventful day, had arrived; and certainly, if it were to be the happiest day of life, it was not fated to be the finest. The rain poured down in torrents; the sky was overcast by dull and heavy clouds, which gave to the month of June the darkness and melancholy of January. However, the guests who were bidden had all arrived; the white trains,

lace veils, and orange flowers, were safely sheltered in the comfortable drawing-rooms, secure from the contamination of overflowing gutters and muddy pavements. All eyes were wandering in admiration over the charming figure, and almost as charming costume, of the beautiful bride. Tittering misses were inwardly rehearsing the parts they expected ere long to be called upon to play, as principals; while their well-satisfied mammas were as silently speculating upon chances and certainties. Quiet and silence had succeeded to the thunders of the street-door knocker. Where was Travers? What could have become of the fervent and impatient lover? The clock of St. George's church had long announced the awful hour of ten; the one appointed for the ceremony. Half-past ten, eleven, were successively counted. The bride turned fearfully pale,—the ladies were fidgety, the men stared, and looked out of the windows upon the wet and desolate streets: still no bridegroom arrived. A messenger was despatched to his lodgings; who quickly came back with the information, that Mr. Travers had, on coming in from the country the day before, received Miss Williams's letter, and had immediately gone out, but had never since returned home.

The confusion consequent upon this information may easily be imagined. The fair and intended bride fainted, and was carried to her room. The company separated in astonishment, half sorry to leave a good breakfast untouched, but pleased with the prospect of having such a delicious topic of gossip to retail to all their acquaintances. A sad and weary day ensued;

no letter, tidings, or information, arrived from Travers. Miss Williams was seriously indisposed; but she conversed long and anxiously with her friend; and the letter which had been written to Travers formed no slight topic of their conversation. It may reasonably be asked, was Mrs. Townsend acquainted with the contents of that epistle? did Travers actually receive it? and, in fact, what were its contents?

They were well known to the widow: and the letter, which had been received by the gentleman, was as follows: —

"I have often, Travers, accused, myself of irresolution and duplicity; and you, I fear, will equally deem me culpable. I would not for worlds, nay, not for the preservation of your esteem and affection, conceal from you, any longer, that which it was my duty to have communicated to you at an earlier period of our acquaintance. Pray do justice to the warm attachment and excellent advice of Mrs. Townsend, who, as a kind and considerate friend, has, for some time past, earnestly counselled me to confide fully in you. Long I imprudently and foolishly neglected her counsel. Hesitation and anxiety have occasioned that distress of mind upon which you so often observed. Mrs. Townsend has again pointed out decisively to me, the misery and danger that may result hereafter from any prolonged concealment. Learn, then, that I am the natural child of a father, whose younger days were passed in poverty and obscurity, and were subsequently marked by crime and punishment. My parent's name was

Williams Morgan, of humble birth in North Wales: he was the victim of disreputable associates, and became their companion. Merciful God! that a daughter's hand should be compelled to trace the fact, — the appalling truth! my father was a convicted felon; and was transported to New South Wales. When the term of punishment was passed, my father became a reformed and altered man. Excellent abilities, joined to persevering industry, raised him, by degrees, to a respectable station in that colony; and enabled him to acquire an amount of wealth almost unparalleled in the annals of that country. I was born after the term of years for which the sentence endured. My father's gains soon enabled him to remove me from the colony, and to send me at an early age to England. I was placed under the protection of Mrs. Townsend, the widow of a surgeon, who practised in Sidney; and from whom my parent had received great kindness. My parents both died in New South Wales. At my father's desire, his maternal name of Williams was given to me; and the large fortune which he had amassed was remitted to this country, for my benefit, with a handsome legacy to my protectress. I feel that I am the offspring of disgrace! and forgive me for expressing, that the conviction of your feelings and prejudices on the subject of birth and connexion has hitherto tended to encourage my imprudent silence. Trusting in your generosity and affection, never, never, I conjure you, Travers, reproach me! Let not condescension assume the disguise of pity! I would rather

hazard a broken heart than the misery of future and suppressed contempt. If your sentiments be not altered by this communication, come to me as soon as you possibly can. "Your ever affectionate

CAROLINE."

Mrs. Townsend exerted herself in every way to soothe the unhappy Caroline; but no consolations or exertions, not even the fancy of Mrs. Townsend herself, could attempt to convince the unfortunate girl that the absence and silence of Travers could be attributable to any other cause than the abovementioned communication. It was too evident that pride and prejudice had conquered the desire of amassing riches, the admiration of beauty, and love itself, if such a passion had ever in fact existed. Travers was faithless, and by his silence had added insult to injury. A physician was called in, who recommended instant change of scene for Miss Williams. A short space of time sufficed for the arrangements — the ladies were eager to remove at once from the publicity and scandal which the late events would be likely to attract: they dismissed all their establishment, with the exception of Caroline's maid, and a few days found the party on their way to the Rhenish provinces. It should be remarked that the kind and considerate Captain Miller called on the ladies two or three times before their departure, was admitted to friendly conferences with Mrs. Townsend, and made every offer of service and assistance.

Twelve months had elapsed, during the course of which the ladies had visited different parts of Germany,

Switzerland, and Italy; and had finally taken up their quarters in Paris. Miss Williams had gradually recovered her good looks, cheerfulness, and tranquillity. No intelligence had been received from Travers; and even Caroline was induced to concur in her friend's opinion, that the conduct of her former admirer had been any thing but honourable. Mrs. Townsend did not hesitate to express her sentiments in a very unqualified manner; and she took frequent occasion to congratulate Caroline upon her happy escape from a dissipated, thoughtless, and unfeeling man, whose embarrassments and extravagance were the common talk of every body.

In the latter part of their tour Captain Miller had come across them, no doubt by mere chance. "How singular! how fortunate!" exclaimed Mrs. Townsend. With very little persuasion Caroline was prevailed upon by the widow to allow the captain to become their travelling companion from Italy to France. He was so respectful, so mindful of the slightest wish, so sensible, so conciliating, never presuming—at least this was the opinion of the widow; and Miss Williams never found reason to contradict it. By the time the party were established in Paris the gallant captain had already made his approaches in the most prudent and skilful manner. Mrs. Townsend, like a faithful and wary ally, brought forward his merits in every advantageous light: she told Caroline that she had, on a former occasion, availed herself of the advice and experience of Miller, who was informed of all the cir-

cumstances relative to Miss Williams, &c. She also hinted to her fair friend how desirable it was that she, Caroline, should be settled in life with some worthy man capable of appreciating her merits, and of affording her the protection of a husband.

Women! ye charming, but uncertain creatures, what is seriously to be pleaded in defence of your consistency? Caroline Williams, though she sometimes spared a sigh and a tear to the remembrance of her former attachment, became at last an attentive listener as well to the captain as to Mrs. Townsend.

Not to be prolix in this narrative, we will briefly relate, that in one month after their arrival in Paris Miss Williams had consented to become the wife of Captain Miller, and an early day was appointed for their union. A few Parisian acquaintances were only invited, and the marriage was to take place as privately as possible at the British ambassador's chapel. The morning came, ushered in by the grateful auspices of a bright and unclouded sun. A truly merry French party were assembled at the hotel where the ladies were resident —a plenteous and elegant *dejeûner à la fourchette* was already placed upon the table, to await the return of the bridal party from the celebration of the marriage—all, all had made their appearance save the gallant and expected bridegroom. It was much past the settled time—Mrs. Townsend grew fidgety—Miss Williams nervous, though she exhibited no outward sign of dejection. "C'est inconcevable!" cried Madame de Solette, a lively brunette, one of the invited guests;

" dites donc, Madame Townsend, Messieurs les Anglais sont-ils tous comme celuila ?"

Was it then that the fair Caroline was doomed to a second disappointment? Indeed she was—Captain Miller never made his appearance: but in the course of another hour a loud bustle in the court-yard, and the hasty steps of some one ascending the stairs without any ceremony, announced the approach of an unexpected guest. In a few minutes Digby Travers, the lost and faithless man, rushed into the room, heedless of the presence of the astonished company, and half demolishing the costly robe of Madame de Solette, by the transmission of a bottle of *Chambertin* into her lap, which, in his hurry and awkwardness, he had brushed off the table. Travers, grasping Miss Williams's hands, cried out, " Oh! Caroline, Caroline, we have been cruelly used—shamefully treated!"

Now it was very strange, but strictly true, that Miss Williams did not faint, or withdraw her taper fingers from the rather violent pressure of Travers's more robust hands: she changed colour a little, but courted eagerly his explanation. Mrs. Townsend exhibited evident tokens of tremor or indisposition, and quickly quitted the apartment. In a few words Travers *told* his eventful tale, to which Caroline listened with painful and increasing interest, and to which the rest of the company listened, without understanding a word. We will abstract the recital:—

On the receipt of the letter of Caroline Williams, Travers, who really was under the impulse of an ardent

and disinterested affection, hurried from his lodgings to bear, in his own person, the assurance of his confirmed love and devotion to his mistress. We have before hinted that Travers was deeply embarrassed; he had hoped (without any mercenary motives) to have settled with his creditors through the intervention of a distant relative, who was willing to assist him, upon the prospect of the profitable marriage, then almost certain—but rivals and lawyers' clerks are as active as favoured lovers. Before Travers had turned the adjoining street, he found himself in the custody of bailiffs' followers, having been taken in execution on a judgment debt of some standing. The fact was, that Captain Miller, who, with all his amiable and saint-like qualities, was a designing and intriguing hero, had contrived to put himself in the shoes of the only judgment creditor who was really hostile to Travers, and had actually sued out process against him. Travers was hurried off to prison; his friendly relative was absent on the continent. In despair and grief, though almost ashamed to tell the truth, he wrote a few hurried lines to Miss Williams, to apprise her of his misfortune; but the captain and his ally, Mrs. Townsend, were prepared for all contingencies. The maid who attended upon Caroline was already in the pay and interest of the conspirators—neither that letter, nor many others which were written by Travers to Miss Williams, were ever delivered to her. The plot had been carefully framed. Mrs. Townsend, who had been greatly irritated at Travers's unceremonious rejection of her pro-

posal to become one of his family after his marriage, had determined upon breaking off the match, if possible: hence her motive in advising Caroline to make the communication to her lover, which has been already noticed.—The captain was a distant relation of the widow; and he, a sly and prudent fellow, readily expressed his hope, his fond wish, that if he ever obtained the hand of Miss Williams, Mrs. Townsend would honour him by retaining her influence and position in his house and family. When Travers was liberated, through the assistance of his own relations, he soon discovered the real author of his arrest; and, by the means of a discarded servant of Mrs. Townsend, a former admirer of the intriguing maid, he also arrived at the development of the manœuvres which had been carried on against him, the treachery practised as to his letters, &c. He hastily departed for the Continent in search of his lovely mistress, and vowing revenge against the gallant Miller. Travers had but lately arrived in Paris, having traced out the route of the parties, and had met the captain on the evening of the preceding day. Words soon led to a very angry discussion, and a hostile meeting was arranged for an early hour in the ensuing morning in the Bois de Boulogne. This was very annoying to the captain, but there was no alternative, and an encounter took place, in which Miller was severely wounded.

At the end of the narrative, Caroline, who had dropped many a feeling tear during the recital, suffered her lover to steal a warm and hearty embrace. The

Parisian ladies and gentlemen present, though they could not collect the sense of Travers's rapid elocution, yet were able to understand something from the energetic action which so well suited the word, and accordingly all exclaimed, "C'est magnifique—charmant!" while the ladies also cried, "Vraiment, c'est un bel homme!" and the gentlemen responded, "Elle est belle comme un ange!" But it is time to close our history—every thing being explained to the satisfaction of all persons excepting Mrs. Townsend, it was agreed that all the party were hungry, and that there was something novel and interesting in eating the *dejeûner* first and in marrying afterwards; so accordingly, while Miss Williams and her lover were whispering all manner of sweet things to each other, Madame de Solette, Monsieur le Comte de Raton, Madlle. de Mornier, &c., were eagerly and actively employed upon the sweet and palatable things displayed on the breakfast table. "Permettez-moi, Madame, une verre de Champagne," cried the officious Comte de Raton; "C'est délicieux, ce pâté de Perigord," mumbled Madame de Solette, her piquant and miniature mouth fully occupied with the dainty morsels; "Mais, arrêtez donc, Mons. le Comte, je vous en prie, une très-petite verre de Parfait Amour," delicately expostulated Madlle. de Mornier—"Yes, my friends," cried Travers in ecstasy—"Parfait Amour! Caroline has consented—God bless her! To-morrow we are to be married, and to-morrow pray come to breakfast again."

And really on the morrow Travers and Caroline

Williams were indissolubly united in the fast and holy bonds of matrimony. Mrs. Townsend soon removed herself from the hotel; but Caroline and Travers took care, by settling a comfortable provision upon her, that she should be independent, and free from any pecuniary want or privation. Captain Miller in time recovered from his wound, and finally took his passage for India, to join his corps in the Hon. East India Company's service, in quarters at Wallahilladinabad, a very lively station with one European resident, surrounded by a jungle, and situated about six hundred miles north of Calcutta, there to console himself for past disappointments with his hookah and punkah, his sangaree and half batta.

CAPTAIN GRAY.

BY THE AUTHOR OF SAYINGS AND DOINGS.

Opinions widely differ upon the expediency and advantages of early marriage, and there can be no question but that, in many instances, very young mothers are induced to keep back their well-grown daughters, and even young fathers feel jealous of their forward sons; but there are exceptions to all general rules, or perhaps it may be charitably inferred that the instances to which I now refer are the exceptions to the better general rule. Certain it is that, in the family I am about to describe, the mother of Mary Gray, still young and beautiful, felt nothing like apprehension and jealousy at beholding her lovely daughter—what artists, speaking of pictures, call—a repetition of herself.

Captain Gray, the husband of this exemplary parent, had married her when she was scarce eighteen, and he not yet of age; theirs was a match of love, founded upon sincere attachment—pure and disinterested—encouraged, in the first instance, by their mutual friends, and eventually sanctioned by their parents.

Massinger says—

> "The sum of all that makes a just man happy
> Consists in the well choosing of his wife;
> And then, well to discharge it, does require
> Equality of years, of birth, and fortune."

The union of Captain, then Lieutenant Gray, with the daughter of Colonel Morgan, was singularly characterized by this happy equality; their ages, rank, and fortune were as nearly alike as it would be possible to imagine in such a match. Gray was the son of an old and gallant soldier; Fanny Morgan was the daughter of a distinguished veteran. She was an only daughter—Gray was an only son; and although the ardour of youth, and an hereditary love of his noble profession induced him, so long as his country called for his active services, to continue in the field, he consummated his military career on the triumphant day of Waterloo; having fought gallantly under his illustrious chief, and returned to his native home, his devoted wife, and infant daughter, with but one slight wound as an honourable alloy to the praises he had received, and the promotion he had obtained.

Upon the permanent establishment of the peace which has ever since those days of England's glory continued, Captain Gray went upon half-pay, resolved to pass the remainder of his life—until, at least, some fresh interruption to the tranquillity of Europe should occur—in the comfort of an humble, happy home—in the society of his devoted wife—in the cultivation of the arts and sciences, in which he was already *highly* accomplished—and in superintending, jointly with his beloved Fanny, the education of their only daughter.

It is scarcely possible to depict a scene of more perfect happiness than that which the sweet retirement of this amiable family exhibited. Their lives were un-

ruffled by the slightest discontent; their daughter grew in grace and goodness as she grew in years, and at eighteen was as perfect a pattern of innocence and virtue as ever blessed a father and mother. Her beauty it is needless to describe. I have already spoken of her resemblance to her mother; in mind, as well as person, the resemblance held good. Educated at home, under the parental eye, she had acquired all the accomplishments which the present state of society requires, unalloyed by the pertness of display, or the affectation of a bashfulness which she did not feel. Her character was purely natural—of guile or deception she could scarcely form any distinct idea, for her father's heart was full of honour and truth, and her mother's mind was pure as the driven snow.

There are, they say, spots on the sun, and never yet did there exist a faultless human being. Gray had a fault of temper; in earlier life his character had been marked by an irritability of disposition, induced no doubt, in a certain degree, by the habit of command, and the promptitude of discipline to which, in his youth, he had been almost prematurely accustomed. He was the farthest from a quarrelsome man in the world, but he was hasty and even violent, if he even suspected the candour and sincerity of those to whom he had given his friendship and confidence; and sensitively jealous of his honour, which, however, no man had ever ventured to impeach. It was with a consciousness of this almost morbid sensibility, that his existence in youth was a continual struggle to repress

feelings which were of so tender and delicate a nature, that few people in the world would give him credit for their real origin. Nothing can more satisfactorily prove to the sceptical—if such there be—in the power of the influence which a charming, amiable, good woman is able to exert over the man of her heart—the husband of her choice—than the change which matrimony worked in *him*. Orpheus softened rocks, and made stones move; but the sweet voice, and yet sweeter example of a beloved wife can do more than the fabled musician ever did. From the day of his marriage to the period at which the reader is introduced to his happy family, this irritability had been gradually subsiding, and at the time now referred to the vivid colourings of a highly excitable temper, like the glaring tints of a new picture, had become mellowed by time, and softened into harmony; and if the fire slumbered in the breast of Gray, it never burst out in any of the irregular coruscations which, at a previous part of his career, it certainly had done.

I have already said that their sweet retirement was an earthly paradise. Surrey was the county he had chosen wherein to pitch his tent after the death of his gallant father. A spot romantically beautiful in its views—for although the subjects of Cockaigne judge Surrey by the borough of Southwark or Kennington Common, there are more lovely bits of finished landscape within thirty miles of London, in that county (where it touches Sussex), than are to be found at ten times the same distance in others.

Conceive a cottage—"a cottage of gentility"—placed on the brow of a gentle declivity facing the south, commanding from its woodbine-covered verandah an extensive view over a splendid valley, highly cultivated, studded with farms and villas, bounded at a distance of some fifteen or twenty miles by the boldly-rising downs of Sussex, over whose summits one might almost see that bright gleaming line of light which tells the presence of the sea beyond their swelling undulations. The house combining every comfort—luxury, if you will. Gray's library complete—his well-kept collection of books, of birds, of minerals, of shells—for he was generally scientific, and although not perking himself up for a "man of science," far above the οι πολλοι of pretenders. His guns, his rods, and his spears—for he was a sportsman for all game, running, flying, or swimming; his drawing materials—for he was an artist; his flute—for he was a musician; his lathe—for he was a turner. All these, and a thousand other dear literary comforts, crowded and adorned his snuggery into which the wife of his bosom, and the daughter of his heart, would venture, to call him to a walk, or a ride, or a drive.

His establishment had all that could be wished, and more than was wanted to be comfortable; but comfort was the word by which it was to be designated, and the evenings, as the autumn closed in, were enlivened by visiters from the neighbourhood, which, for the situation, was populous—or from the market-town, distant not more than a mile and a half; and then the

sweet and single-minded Mary sang like a syren, while she looked like a sylph. I never saw but one girl who was her equal—perhaps her superior, in this peculiarity. When she sang she looked more beautiful than at any other moment of her life. In most singers, the act of singing causes an exertion—it might almost be called a distortion of countenance; but Mary Gray, like this one other, looked even more lovely as the rich, melodious tones flowed honey-like over her lips, which, being just enough opened to show a row of pearly teeth, scarce seemed to move as she riveted all eyes, and enchained all ears. I once told her mother, that nothing was wanting but a glass-case to cover her.

What a happy father—what an enviable mother! Mary Gray was the theme of praise with all, for she was good as she was beautiful, and her mind was as lovely as her person. Go now to the village—now—and ask after her—mention her name, and see how the people, old and young, will lift up their eyes to Heaven and bless her. She lives in the hearts of those who knew her, but——

What can mortality have more of happiness than these Grays had?—Esteemed, respected, courted by the best and worthiest of their neighbours, they lived, indeed, an enviable life; and then, in the season, six weeks at an hotel made a variety in their course of proceedings, and Mary visited her relations, and heard Malibran, and Grisi, and Tosi, and all the unmusically-named musical people of the Opera—went to two or three of the best parties—learned to admire the best

artists by their works at exhibitions, and even attended lectures, and visited microscopes, and returned tremblingly alive to the abominations of Thames water, in one drop of which thousands of gigantic monsters are perpetually dancing; and disgusted with the coarseness of the finest French cambric, which, developed to the eye magnified three million times, is infinitely more like a flounder-fisher's net ill-made; than any thing else to which I can compare it. That National Gallery of Science in the Lowther Arcade, is enough to turn the heads of men, women, and children, and is better worth seeing than any thing I know of, except the late Mr. Irving, and the present Mr. O'Connell.

And, after all this excitement, only fancy the dear delicious repose of the cottage, and the fresh breeze blowing over the valley, and Mary's own dear little *boudoir*, and the welcome of her little dog, and the warbling of her little birds, nay, the bending heads of her dahlias themselves, just bursting forth, seemed to hail her return.

It would seem, perhaps, ill-timed to expatiate upon the charms of this fair creature's mother; but how many fair creatures does one see every day and evening of one's life, who, like Mrs. Gray, look more like the elder sisters of their lovely daughters than their mothers. This is what I said at first—these are the fruits of early marriages. Mrs. Gray was a being full of soul and intellect, and of that sort of intellect which wins rather than conquers—a masculine mind, clothed in feminine delicacy. I always thought that Mrs.

Gray possessed an inherent energy, and a command of powers if she chose to exert them, and if they should at any time be called into action; because, by a constant association with a family, one finds opportunities of judging, not what actually *is*, but what might be, the line any individual of it would, under certain circumstances, adopt. Mrs. Gray was the sweetest, gentlest creature upon earth; and, as Aaron Hill says,

> "As lamps burn silent with unconscious light,
> So modest ease and beauty shine most bright;
> Unaiming charms with edge resistless fall,
> And she, who means no mischief, does it all."

Certainly she meant no mischief; but she was an extraordinary person, and a delightful person, and it was beautiful to see how she exercised what really seemed little else than a sororial sway over her beloved Mary, in order to induce her to what is called "come forward" amongst the gayer parties in London,—for at home dear Mary was really at home.

The reader, who no doubt knows human nature, knows that if a story profess to copy nature, even if it be not a transcript from her wondrous book, it cannot allow a girl like Mary Gray to reach eighteen without a lover—or two—perhaps more; and certainly, if the most valuable qualities of mind and person combined are attractions, our sweet, kind-hearted, unaffected Mary could not fail to do the "mischief" which, in Hill's verses, I have attributed to her mother in her earlier days.

Conceive such a being as Mary Gray. I will not describe her. I have already said she was fit only for a glass-case. But conceive this dear, innocent creature, with eyes too eloquent by half, although they spoke nothing but her innocent thoughts; a figure, unaided by art, perfect as the Medicean Venus; the sweetest voice,—the lightest step, the whitest——But why go on? why talk of her?—rather adopt the well-known lines of the eminent Barnes—

> "She was ————
> But words are wanting to say what:
> Think what a girl should be,—
> ———— And she was that."

Well, then, where the roses blow, and the lilies bow their heads, the bees will come; and of course Gray's house was beset by sundry languishing swains. A neighbouring baronet amongst the number,—an ancient knight came, second in degree, who hinted to Mrs. Gray his anxiety to make poor, dear, downy-cheeked Mary the third Lady Doddlethrops, but he was snubbed by Mamma, who set him half crazy by repeating a satirical couplet made a few years before upon a similar proposition supposed to emanate from the proposer himself:—

> "My first wife for person, my second for purse,
> My third for a warming-pan, doctor, and nurse."

The couplet is rather homely, but Mrs. Gray showed it to him in print, and Doddlethrops was, to use the admirable phraseology of Major Downing, "stumped."

The baronet was long, thin, and genteel; but Mary, who really seemed to have no notion of what his object was in being what they call "a good deal there," gave him no encouragement,—not because she fancied he expected any, but because she did not feel in the slightest degree interested about him, and not having had the advantages of a boarding-school education, she did not know that it was necessary to fancy every man who came into the house a lover.

There certainly *was* a Captain Fitzpatrick—not that I mean any scandal against Queen Elizabeth—but there certainly *was* a Captain Fitzpatrick who, without appearing in the character of suitor to Mary, did contrive to be "there" a good deal. He had some military appointment, something about reserve companies, or recruiting, or something; what, I don't profess exactly to understand, but which Captain Gray did, which kept him at the neighbouring town; and although he was not very handsome, he was very agreeable; and he suited Papa so,—he was a dabbler in science—a good fisherman, and liked *so* much to go out with the Captain, and whip the water, and catch trout, or troll for jack,—and he was such a good shot, not quite so good a shot as Papa, but still he was fond of the sport; and then he drew prettily, and fluted to admiration: and Mrs. Gray told Mary she had never seen a man of *his* age so talented and so unaffected;—and then they came home from their shooting, and Captain Gray asked Captain Fitzpatrick to stop and dine, and send home his horse, and send for his

clothes, and sleep, and so he did. And Captain Fitzpatrick got up in the morning early, and so did Mary; and he was a bit of a botanist, and he had made a collection of the indigenous plants of the neighbourhood, and he had a little *hortus siccus* of his own, and he squashed the leaves of roses between the leaves of books, and dried them, and gummed them; and then Mary sat down and drew them, and then they dried some more; and then the Baronet called; and then, at Mary's earnest request, there was nobody at home, although they were all sitting in Papa's *sanctum;* and then Captain Fitzpatrick sent to his lodgings for a double flageolet, and an electrifying machine, and a key-bugle, and an air-gun, and a stuffed duck with red feet, which he had shot a month before. And when they came, they talked of red-footed ducks, and were electrified, and played the key-bugle and the double flageolet; and then Captain Fitzpatrick showed them how to do Cardinal Puff, and sing "Great A, little A," and "The Pigs;" and thence glanced off into a disquisition upon the different schools of painting, in which he so much distinguished himself, that, after the family-party had retired for the night, Captain Gray pronounced it as his opinion to Mrs. Gray that Captain Fitzpatrick was a very extraordinary creature.

There seemed to be a gaiety in the very atmosphere of Gray's villa: the air appeared to have the quality of the laughing-gas of which we have heard and seen the effects; and certainly the conversation of Fitzpatrick, who was the delight of his host, was never so agreeable

as when under its roof. One of the family began to think no man could be so agreeable anywhere else. There was a vivacity about the Captain mixed with strong talent, and feelings of sympathy with misfortune, which to Mary's youthful fancy gave indications of qualities in the heart equal to those of the head which it was impossible to deny their said friend. Gray saw the effect the Captain had produced upon his darling daughter, and saw it without regret. Fitzpatrick was of his own profession,—held a similar rank with himself,—was the nephew of a man whom he had known on service, who was now dead—of a highly respectable family,—and holding what in peace time was as good a command as he could hold,—and Gray said to his dearest Fanny, after some fortnight or three weeks of this intimacy,—

"Fanny, that Captain Fitzpatrick is a clever, agreeable, and gentlemanly man. I know his connexions. I think he has attached himself to our beloved girl. I am sure she admires and esteems him. I don't blame her. Speak to her about it. We have no disguises amongst us. Tell her to be candid. Ask her if he has *said* anything. I am somewhat of an adept in looks. But, above all, do this,—you need not, I believe,—tell her to speak *her* mind; for if their affection is mutual it shall be a match."

"I believe," said his wife, "that nothing of the sort you suspect has taken place. Mary, unused to the world and its ways, is caught and attracted by the gaiety of our visiter, his universality of accomplish-

ments, his excessive good humour, and above all, the total absence of affectation, which she so utterly detests in the generality of young men of the present day. But as for love;—no, no: she would have made *me* her confidante in the first instance had any such sentiment taken possession of her."

"I am not so sure of that," said Captain Gray; "she may have taken the infection without being aware of the character of the complaint. As a physician, I judge of my patient by the eyes; and I think I am not to be deceived."

He was *not* deceived. It was after the next day's breakfast, while Gray was preparing his fishing-tackle, and his exemplary wife was putting in order certain pieces of work for the evening exercise (for they were a notable family), that Mary rushed into the room where her mother was, her eyes streaming with tears, and her cheeks burning red. She spoke not, but threw her arms around her mother's neck, and sobbed aloud.

"What is it, my child?" said Mrs. Gray.

Mary could return no answer.

"Speak, dearest; compose yourself: tell me."

"Henry! Henry!" were the only words Mary could utter, and she then fell into a fit of weeping.

"My love, my dearest love," said the anxious mother, "tell me—explain—what has happened?"

"I do not know," said Mary; "I cannot tell. I—am,"—and here she relapsed into another fit of sobbing, which rendered all attempts at explanation unavailing.

The *denouement*, however, was at hand. Before the recovery of the dear girl, Captain Gray had entered the room. He saw the state of affairs there, and relieved the agitated partner of his fate by announcing that, as he had anticipated, Henry had proposed to Mary, and Mary had, as far as she was concerned, accepted him.

"God forbid," added Gray, "that I should prevent their union. Tell my beloved child how I feel upon the subject, the moment she is able to hear and bear the intelligence."

Soon did the tender, terrified creature awake to life and happiness,—soon did her mother make her comprehend the affectionate part her devoted father had acted,—and, before that day closed, Henry Fitzpatrick and Mary Gray were acknowledged as affianced man and wife.

It was quite delightful to see the happiness of Captain Gray. With a competence himself, and enough to make his child and her husband comfortable during his life, and more than comfortable after his death, he felt that, in giving a clever, amiable, and agreeable husband to his daughter, he had secured a delightful and suitable companion for himself. The difference in the ages, after all, was scarcely perceptible as far as the unity of their pursuits was concerned, or the interchange of their thoughts and opinions. Gray was somewhere about forty-five; Fitzpatrick not very far from thirty. Mary, from the moment of his avowal and declaration, became a different creature; the re-

serve which the presence of even the most intimate acquaintance produces in a family-circle was now gone, and Henry became one of themselves.

There was but one stipulation which Gray made as contingent upon the marriage; namely, that Fitzpatrick should, since there was no glory to be gained in these piping times of peace, go like himself upon half-pay, and as he had some fortune of his own, live at least some part of the year with them: "And," added Gray, in the full spirit of hospitality, "the greater part it is, the better pleased we shall be."

Nothing could be more agreeable to the mother of the bride-elect than this arrangement—nothing more satisfactory to the bride-elect herself, who—as soon as her thoughts and ideas became sufficiently composed to permit her to recollect and consider the sudden change of her position from the exclusive character of an affectionate daughter, to that of an affianced wife—felt perfectly satisfied that, if anything could add to the felicity which, in the enthusiasm of the moment, she so ardently and so naturally anticipated, it would be the enjoyment of the society of those parents, to whose care and attention she owed all the advantages which education and precept had afforded her, and to whose indulgent devotion to her wishes she was indebted for their ready acquiescence in that which, amongst all her blushings, and weepings, and faintings, was evidently the wish of her heart.

It was clear that Henry Fitzpatrick partook deeply of the feelings of his beloved Mary; his joy at the hap-

py termination of their courtship—if courtship that could be called where neither spoke of love, but lived on, as it were, a life of happy sympathy, until at length that declaration came which justified the tender solicitude he had always evinced for her, and drew from *her* a confession of feelings, of the existence of which she was not before aware—they loved unconsciously—the light had burst upon them—they were blest; and Gray, recurring to the principles upon which he had himself acted with regard to his own Fanny, beheld, in the marriage of his child with Captain Fitzpatrick, the bright realization of all his most sanguine hopes for her comfort and happiness.

And what an evening was that which followed the day upon which the discovery was made! Henry had at once become a member of the family. Gray and he sat longer than usual after dinner—their conversation assumed a tone of deeper interest and closer intimacy. Fitzpatrick described the excellence of his father, the virtues and accomplishments of his mother—both long since dead; spoke with the warmest affection of his sisters, one of whom was married to an officer in India—the other settled as the wife of an eminent merchant at Rio de Janeiro. He described them as a family of love, strangely separated by circumstances, but strongly bound to each other by affection. With his uncle, who had been well-known to Gray, he had principally resided until his death; and to his exertions and interest acknowledged himself indebted, in a very great degree, for the promotion he had obtained, and for one

or two staff appointments which he had previously held.

Gray was delighted with his future son-in-law, and when they joined Mary and her mother, perhaps four happier people could not have been found in the populous county of Surrey, including even the loyal and constitutional borough of Southwark.

During all the arrangements for the wedding, the sweet disposition of "dear Mary"—as she was always called by those who knew her—manifested itself upon every occasion. Self-love, self-interest, were unknown to her ingenuous breast—confiding generosity and genuine purity of heart shone pre-eminent in all her suggestions, and in the expression of her wishes; and when the day was fixed, it really seemed a day of mourning in the village, upon which a girl so sweet, so gentle, and so good should be taken from amongst its inhabitants.

But she was to return—she was to pass the greater part of her time at home—it was her home—a dear, dear home—a home of comfort and of peace; and when the bells rang merrily, and the white favours fluttered in the breeze, her heart, full of love, of hope, of happiness, still lingered amidst its bowers, and yearned for the day when she might revisit its blest shades.

The sacred service was performed, and one more touching or awful—save the last—can scarcely be imagined. The obligations it imposes—the sacrifices it commands—the forbearance it inculcates—the virtues it requires—to the observance of which two souls are

pledged in the face of Heaven, render its celebration in a small retired church, where all who hear it are more or less interested in the proceedings of the day, seriously impressive. Upon this occasion it was read in the most imposing manner by one of the brightest ornaments of our establishment. Gray surrendered the jewel of his heart to her husband—they were blessed—they were ONE.

And then came the little fête, and gaiety in its just degree. The neighbouring gentry assembled round the well-stored breakfast-table, and before the happy couple departed for the honey-moon, their united healths were toasted in "the gaily-circling glass." It was impossible for Gray and his wife not to catch the infection of the mirth which animated the party: but when the moment of separation came, neither Mary nor her mother could utter a syllable. The last "God bless you, beloved of my heart!" was drowned in tears; and as the carriage drove off, Gray covered his eyes with his hands, and sank upon a sofa wholly exhausted by his feelings.

She was gone—their dear, their only child was gone. When the evening closed in, where was dear Mary's smile, that they so loved to gaze upon—where her sweet voice, that they so delighted to hear? All was still—the riot rout of gaiety was over—there stood her harp uncovered—her favourite books unmoved—all seemed sadly silent—but *she* was happy, and it would be selfish to indulge in grief at her absence; yet when they went to rest, Gray could not help opening the

door of his child's room; and, gazing on its vacancy and stillness, he heaved a sigh which came from his heart of hearts.

When the morning arrived, the same feeling returned. Where was the innocent creature who was wont to welcome them to the beautiful parlour? Where was dear Mary to make the tea? And, let the grave smile—let the cynic sneer at this—rely upon it, the strongest feelings are excited, the bitterest pangs inflicted, by a sudden change in the ordinary, the most common, the most trifling incidents of our lives. To great evils the elastic mind of man stretches—it knits itself for imminent dangers—it withstands great calamities; but in the more minute changes, intimately connected with its habits and feelings, it fails. Ever since this sweet girl had been of an age to live with her devoted parents, she had made this breakfast-tea—this trashy stuff, about which washerwomen are universally solicitous—this strange commodity, for which the poor with ungrumbling readiness pay a duty of 100 per cent. for the gratification of giving six or seven shillings a pound for nothing mixed with hot water; in order to render which palatable, they pay so much more for sugar and milk. It was not the tea—it was not that Mrs. Gray could not make the tea as well as her daughter, or that the servant could not have made it better, perhaps, than either; but Mary always *had* made the tea—it was a habit—it was part of the ceremony of their unceremonious life—it was a part of the system—a link in the concatenation; and who had the key of the tea-chest? (a proof

highly illustrative of the prudential habits of the Grays,) and where was the sugar? and so on—it was the first break in the first breakfast; but said Gray to his Fanny, "We must bear all this—they will be back soon—please God, she is happy—we must not care for ourselves—we never considered your dear father's breakfast-table when we were breakfasting at Salt Hill the day after *our* wedding."

Mrs. Gray smiled—blushed a little—said nothing—but, I suppose, like Cocky in the fable, "thought the more."

Three or four days reconciled them to this new life, and their neighbours broke in upon its sameness—if that which is novel can be monotonous—by inviting the *solitary* pair to parties made *rather* in honour of the event which they could not but regret, as far as their own personal feelings went.

But was not this regret, in some degree, unjust? Here was a marriage, fulfilling, in every point, the wishes both of the younger and the elder parties; for to call Gray at forty-five, or deem Mrs. Gray at thirty-eight, old—would be to libel not them alone, but human nature herself. If Henry Fitzpatrick had a fault it was in an unevenness, not of temper, but of spirits; he would sometimes subside from all the gaiety of mirth—nay, I might almost go the length of saying, the brilliancy of wit—into a momentary fit of abstraction. Something seemed to flash across him, and, for an instant, depress his spirits: this, however, had been less remarkable since the felicitous arrangement of the mar-

riage, and a letter received on the second morning by Mrs. Gray from her daughter was full of happiness, and delight, and devotion to her husband, who was at once the kindest and most considerate of human beings. Her father, tenderly remembered in the letter, read, and re-read its lines, and clasping the hand of his excellent wife, exclaimed, with genuine fervour, "Thank God, my child is happy!"

It is gratifying to see with what facility, in certain spheres of life, all the difficulties and worries by which the great and gay are incommoded and inconvenienced, are overcome, merely by the aid of reason, prudence, and a desire to be satisfied with a just proportion of the good things of this life without striving after superfluities, the possession of which, in fact, do not confer happiness.

A week of the honeyed four had passed, and the happy couple were still laughing "the sultry hours away" at Richmond, when a letter was brought to Captain Gray, as he was sitting finishing his letters previous to a drive with his dear Fanny in their pony phaeton, containing these words:—

"*Red Lion Inn.*

"SIR,—I am most anxious to see and speak with you. There are reasons why I do not wish to intrude myself into your house. I have travelled hither as rapidly as I could; I have arrived too late; but still, as I *am* here, I think it a duty to have a short conversa-

tion with you, upon the result of which you will decide. "H. F.

"I shall remain here for your answer."

When Gray read this brief and unaccountable epistle, his first inquiry of the messenger who brought it, was, from whose hands he received it. The answer was, from one of the waiters, whose only additional direction was to make the best of his way to Captain Gray's, and to get an answer.

"Was it a gentleman or a lady who wrote?" asked Gray.

The lout did not know; all he knew was that it was to be delivered as fast as possible, and he was to have half-a-crown if he got back in three-quarters of an hour.

These points of the affair at once roused the dormant lion in the Captain's breast. Some man had felt himself injured by some act of his; it was a call—a demand—yet he had come too late—what did *that* mean?—no matter—the fire was kindled—it was something. "A short conversation?" said Gray to himself; "long or short, or be it our first or our last, you shall have it."

His answer was verbal; he would be there directly. The clod ran back, and was at the end of his journey a quarter of an hour before Gray's arrival.

Gray, who was a resolute, determined, and, as I have already said, at an earlier period of his life, what might be called a desperate man, walked into the

sweet shrubbery of his little earthly paradise, and told his wife that he had received a note which called him to the neighbouring town, and would therefore drive thither in the phaeton, transact the business, and return for her. To this, as a well-conducted wife should, dear Mrs. Gray consented, and Gray was so delighted with her sweet accordance with his intention, that in spite of a plush-jacketed gardener pushing along a creaking iron roller over the grass, and in spite of having been married nearly a quarter of a century, he gave her—don't be angry, reader—a sweet, a fervent kiss; there might have been two, and what then?

Gray left her—proceeded into the house—and after a short space of time mounted his phaeton, having, however, with a mixture of chivalry and prudence, slipped under the seat of the carriage his case of duelling pistols, thinking perhaps that he might be unintentionally entangled in some affair of what is called "honour," and being sure, if such should be the case, however ignorant he was at the moment of the possible cause of the appeal, that in a town where military officers were stationed, he could on the instant find a "friend;" for let it be never forgotten that upon no occasion are *friends* so rife as when their amicable exertions tend to the hostile settlement of some such affair.

Had his dear—his influential—his incomparable wife known *this*, would he have gone so armed? However, he went—drove perhaps more rapidly than usual—his child was provided for—his mind was in a

whirl—he desired to have the interview over—it would be off his mind—besides, Fanny was waiting for her drive.

He reached the inn—inquired for the landlord—saw him—asked where the gentleman was who had sent the letter to him by his messenger.

"Gentleman, Sir," said the landlord; "we have no gentleman here, Sir; the letter I forwarded was from a lady."

"A lady!" said Gray; and he laughed at his foolish sensitiveness and his precaution about pistols. "Where is the lady?"

"She expects you, Sir," said the landlord; "I will show you, Sir. Is No. 15 in?" cried he to the chambermaid.

"Yes, Sir."

"This way, Sir," said the landlord; and having arrived at the door of the apartment, opened it, and presented to an extremely agreeable lady "Captain Gray."

Captain Gray bowed. The lady attempted to rise from her seat, but burst into a flood of tears. The Captain, a perfect turtle-dove in his line, could not stand this—he endeavoured to soothe her—she sobbed more audibly, and Gray drew his chair beside her.

"Madam," said the Captain, "what does this mean? why this grief—this agitation? I do not recollect to have ever had the pleasure of seeing you before."

"Me, Sir," said the lady; "no, no, no, Sir; would to God you *had* seen me! misery—wretchedness—

horror—would have been saved to you and those whom you love better than yourself!"—and here a violent paroxysm of grief stopped her utterance.

"What can you mean?" said Gray; "have I injured you? have I wronged any one belonging to you?"

"Oh no, Sir; no," said she; "it is *you* who are wronged—it is I who am wronged—both—both of us; but you even beyond myself; and your lovely, innocent child is married!"

"Great Heaven! what of that?" exclaimed Gray; "what has that to do with it?"

"All, all," said the wretched woman; "if I could have prevented it I would, not for your sake only, but for my own; she is married to Henry Fitzpatrick."

"I know it," said Gray, trembling with agitation for which he could scarcely account; "what then?"

"She is doomed!—she is damned!" screamed the wretched woman.

"Are you in your senses, Madam?" said Gray; "what can you mean by a manner so wild and language so extraordinary?"

"She was your darling daughter," said the lady; "she was your only one—she was all to you and her doting mother—innocent—excellent—pure—virtuous; so they all tell me here. I have seen her home—I have seen the garden she made—I have gazed on the flowers she trained, as I passed your house this morning; but it is all too late—she is lost—and we are both destroyed!"

"Both!" cried Gray; "how? why? in what way

are you associated with my child? tell me—explain —I shall die——"

"Yes, Sir, with your feelings and spirit some one will die. How shall I tell you? how shall I break that noble heart, or excite it to fury?"

"Tell me all," said Gray; "what do you mean?"

"Nerve yourself, then," said she, "and hear me ——I am the lawful wife of Henry Fitzpatrick!"

Gray looked at her incredulously, perhaps indignantly; he stretched his hand out as if to push her from him—she pressed upon its quivering palm the certificate of her marriage!

Words are inadequate to describe the agony of the enraged father at sight of this too fatal document. All the strongest passions to which human nature is subject were in an instant raging in his breast,—devotion for his child,—anguish for her fate,—remorse for his own credulity,—hatred of Fitzpatrick's villany, and revenge for the unmeasurable wrong he had inflicted. It was a fearful sight to see. He struck his pale forehead with his clenched fist, and falling on his knees swore, by the God of his salvation, never to rest until he had avenged the injury done to his beloved, his idolized daughter.

The unhappy creature who had raised the storm screamed with terror on beholding the effects she had produced; but amidst all her grief, writhing as she too was under the infliction of injuries,—rejected, repudiated, abandoned, and forgotten,—the woman triumphed; and when she heard the dreadful denunciation of her

barbarous husband, all his baseness, all her wretchedness were forgotten, and falling at Gray's feet, who was now pacing the room, she exclaimed—"No—no—no, spare him! spare him!—he was my first and only love—he is my husband still!"

The look which the distracted parent cast upon the unhappy suppliant was one of rage and hatred unmixed with pity; the very ground of her appeal to his mercy, that Fitzpatrick was *her* husband, aggravated the poignancy of his grief, and increased the fury of his rage.

"Let the law," continued she, "take its course,—let the punishment he merits be meted out to him—recollect that *we* are both sufferers in the highest degree."

"Both!" echoed Gray, "both!—what a thought!—have you, wretched, deserted, and degraded as you are,—have you had a beloved, an only child, torn from hearts in which she lived, the idol of their worship, the main object of their existence, one whom they have for twenty years watched with the tenderest care, and prayed for with the most fervent devotion!—you have not given such a child to destruction, or surrendered her in the house of God himself, to misery, to wretchedness, and infamy—both!"——

A second attempt on the part of the unhappy woman to soothe the more than half maddened father was equally unsuccessful, and, overcome by her feelings, she fell into a violent fit of hysterics. Gray rang the bell, and, with a solemn composure, directed proper attention to be paid to the sufferer, and then quitting

the inn stepped into his phaeton, which remained at the door, taking with him the certificate of Captain Fitzpatrick's previous marriage.

Who that appreciates the character and feelings of Captain Gray,—who that can imagine the extent of the injury done him, will for a moment doubt whither he went?—Having directed his servant to return home and tell his mistress that he should not return till the afternoon, having been unexpectedly called away on business, he gave his horses the rein and drove as fast they could draw him direct to Croydon, the next post town, where he arrived nearly unconscious of the journey, and ordering a post-chaise from the inn to which he had driven, directed the waiter to put his cloak and "other things" which were in the phaeton into the carriage, and dashed off for Richmond, where Fitzpatrick and his bride were staying.

The reader who recollects what were the "other things," so carelessly spoken of by Gray to the servant at the inn, will perhaps anticipate the course he proposed to take. Great were the evils which arose from his precautionary measures previous to his departure from home. He had his pistols with him: the very presence of these deadly weapons afforded a facility for revenge, which, had they been not at hand, could not have been taken without a lapse of time, during which, reflection, or, more properly, reason might have checked the overflowing torrent of rage and revenge with which the heart's-blood of the distracted parent boiled and gurgled.

He reached the temporary residence of the new-married couple,—they were out—he saw his daughter's maid, who seemed surprised at his arrival, and alarmed at his appearance—they were expected in at four o'clock to dinner, as they were going on the water afterwards;—the table was laid, everything around had an air of neatness and comfort—a drawing, upon which Fitzpatrick had been employing himself, was lying upon the sofa, and Mary's work-box was beside it. The sight of so familiar an object brought something like tears into Gray's eyes.

"You stop dinner, of course, Sir?" said the maid. Gray answered not. "My mistress is quite well, I hope, Sir?" inquired the maid, who had been *her* maid before she became Mary's.

"Well!" said Gray; "yes, poor soul, she is well and happy—I will go and meet my child—which way are they gone?"

"I'm sure, Sir, *I* don't know," said the girl.

"I'll find them," was the reply; and Gray, who felt it impossible to remain quiet in his present state of mind, descended the stairs, crossed the road, and entered the park.

Scarcely had he passed the gate before he beheld his darling child, looking all happiness and beauty, leaning on the arm of her husband: in an instant she recognized the well-known figure of her father, and bounding from Henry's side, she flew rather than ran into his embrace. He clasped her to his heart, and blessed her. Fitzpatrick followed and extended his

hand to Gray, who looked calmly yet sternly at him, but spoke not.

"Is my dear mother here?" asked Mary; "Oh, how good are you to come to see us!"

"God help you!" said Gray, drawing his arm through hers. "Let me see you to your door, I want to speak a word or two to Captain Fitzpatrick."

"To Henry," said Mary, who saw that something dreadful had occurred, she could not guess its meaning. Fitzpatrick in a moment suspected the true cause of the visit.

"Stay, Sir," said Gray, "do me the kindness to wait for me here, I will be back in a minute or two." The consciousness of Fitzpatrick induced him to comply with the request, or rather obey the command without a question.

"My child," said Gray, "my dear unhappy child! —go to your room—you must return home with *me*—you have no business here!"

"Home!" said Mary; "my mother is ill then,—home, dear home, too happy shall I be to go—but Henry——"

"Ha!" exclaimed Gray, in a tone of horror, dread, and disgust—"Don't speak—go in—go in, I will be back almost directly."

He led her to the door, and pressing her pale forehead to his quivering lips, imprinted a kiss upon it, and returned to the park.

When he reached the spot where he left Fitzpatrick, he found him pacing quickly to and fro over a

short space of the turf. Gray walked hastily up to him, and holding forth the certificate of his first marriage, said—

"Is this genuine, Sir? I ask you, Sir, is it genuine?"

"I thought what had happened," said Fitzpatrick.

"You admit it then?" said Gray.

"I——I——" faltered Fitzpatrick.

"Scoundrel!" exclaimed Gray; Villain! nothing but your blood can wash out this crime; here, destroyer, fiend, defend yourself!" saying which, he drew from his pocket the loaded pistols, and throwing one towards Fitzpatrick, cocked that which he held in his hand.

Fitzpatrick hesitated to pick up the weapon, although thus peremptorily called upon to do so.

"Hear me, Sir," said Fitzpatrick.

"I hear nothing, wretch!" cried Gray; "deny or confirm—aye or no to my question; is this paper genuine?"

"It *is* genuine, but——"

"Enough," said Gray; "take that pistol, Sir—do not add cowardice to your other villanies—here are people coming—I do not stir, if all the world were in arms against me, till I have avenged my child's destruction; d'ye hear me, Sir?—The curses of an injured father be upon your head!"

Fitzpatrick, convinced that any attempt at explanation would be useless, stooped and took the pistol in his hand; the moment he was possessed of it, Gray, with-

out waiting for him to raise or even cock it, fired at him, and with an unerring aim drove the bullet through his heart. Fitzpatrick leaped up at the instant he was hit, and in the next rolled upon the turf a lifeless corpse.

Gray's eyes sparkled with unearthly joy as he beheld the destroyer of his happiness dead at his feet; no touch of pity moved his heart—no pang of remorse agitated his bosom—he looked on the work of blood before him with gloating satisfaction.

The sound of the pistol had attracted two of the keepers, who ran to the spot, whither they were followed by several persons who had witnessed the whole affair. The moment Gray, who remained standing close to the spot where Fitzpatrick lay, found himself surrounded by people, the expression of his countenance and his manner suddenly changed; he became, as it appeared, torpid, and unconscious of what had happened; his mighty rage had burst like thunder on his devoted victim, and a dead and fearful calm had succeeded to the storm.

"I did the deed," said Gray; "do not lay hands upon me—I will go where you please. I killed him; and if any of you here are fathers, which amongst you will blame me? He ruined my child—my only child: have I done wrong?"

The moment the gate-keeper saw the body, he recognized it, from having seen Fitzpatrick constantly walking with Mary; this circumstance of course led to the knowledge of their residence, close at hand—a

knowledge which the keeper imparted to the by-standers.

"Yes, gentlemen," said Gray, "this man is right; my poor child is there, waiting for her father; what's to be done?"

There was an evident wildness and abstraction in Gray's manner, which appalled and terrified the surrounding crowd. The police, however, were called in, and Gray was delivered into their custody. This circumstance seemed to awaken all his dormant faculties; the dread of being separated from Mary—the agonies of anticipating her feelings—her lone situation—the absence of her mother—the death of a husband of whom she yet knew nothing unfavourable—all these thoughts flowed into his mind, and a flood of tears brought relief to his sufferings.

The scene was dreadful, but its horrors were in some degree mitigated by a circumstance for which he could not have been prepared. His wife—the ever fond and anxious Fanny—surprised at the abrupt departure of her husband, and by no means satisfied with the message brought back by the servant, or the account he gave of his master's conduct after a lengthened interview with a strange female, proceeded instantly to the inn. Her inquiries confirmed her suspicions; the female stranger was still there; and so ill from agitation, consequent upon her conversation with Gray, as to have been compelled to send for medical advice, under which she had been conveyed to bed.

Mrs. Gray sought and obtained an interview with

her. In a few faltering words she explained the dreadful history to her visiter, who in an instant foresaw the course her husband would adopt, and resolved at all hazards to follow him as speedily as possible to Richmond, hoping, indeed, to overtake him before he reached that place. Hence came a slight alloy of wretchedness; she arrived at Richmond five minutes after Mary's return and her father's fatal walk to the park. The moment she heard of his proceedings, she again anticipated the worst, and flew rather than ran to the scene of action—all too late to save her devoted husband, but yet in time to throw herself into his arms and hide her burning face in his bosom.

"My wife here!" cried Gray; "thank God for that, for my poor child's sake; do not look there," continued he, "he is dead!"

"Heaven forbid!" sobbed Fanny.

"It is over—all over," replied Gray, "and I must go with these gentlemen."

"Go!" screamed his agonized wife.

"Yes, go," said Gray; "I am prepared; I must answer this, first to the law, and then to God; but what was my provocation? you know it."

"I do, I do," said his wife.

"Was I wrong? was I cruel? was I barbarous?"

A gentleman who had watched the whole of this scene suggested, as the crowd was increasing, that it would be better if Mrs. Gray were to quit them, and return to the house, to her daughter, and remain until something could be decided as to the next step necessary to be taken with the prisoner—for such he was.

The agonies of parting seemed more than Fanny could endure: but Gray, who had recovered his composure, begged her to follow the advice of the gentleman. "It will be better," said he; "Mary wants your comfort—your consolation. We shall meet soon: but there are forms to be gone through—the law requires it; to-morrow all will be well, perhaps."

To describe the separation of the fond and faithful couple would be impossible. The gentleman who had suggested her return accompanied Mrs. Gray to the house of mourning, to which the body of the wretched Fitzpatrick was subsequently removed; while Gray was taken before a county magistrate in the neighbourhood, by whom, after a short examination, in which the evidence against him was too clear to admit of question, he was committed to the gaol at Kingston, at which place the assizes were at that moment going on. A coroner's inquest was subsequently held upon the body, and a verdict of wilful murder was returned.

Who in the most vivid calculations of the uncertainty of human affairs could have fancied it possible that on the evening of a day which dawned upon a happy family like that of Gray, an accumulation of evil should have fallen upon it like this? by which murder, death, imprisonment, guilt, sorrow, and disgrace, supplanted comfort, affection, devotion and duty. In consequence of the sitting of the court at Kingston, the fate of the unhappy Gray was hastened beyond his hopes—for hopes he had. Strong in the consciousness of his own sufferings and provocations, and feeling an assurance

of sympathy from every father's heart, he considered the verdict of the coroner's jury a mere form, and their decision, one which was legally inevitable, from the absence of any extenuating evidence. The same feeling supported him when the grand jury found a true bill against him. They, too, judged upon *exparte statements*, and if the fact were established, they had no other duty to perform than find the bill; nor could he be persuaded either to admit the criminality of his conduct, or to believe that his defence, delivered pathetically and earnestly, could fail of producing an acquittal, until he heard the fatal verdict of guilty, after a long and patient trial, and beheld the Judge, covered with the fatal cap, pronounce the sentence of the court, that he was to die on the following Monday.

There was not a dry eye in the court when the awful *fiat* was delivered except his own. He stood erect—he flinched not—he faltered not: but when the Judge had concluded his solemn address, he bowed his head respectfully, and said in a low, yet firm and manly voice, "God's will be done!"

It was a dreadful sight to see, as he passed from the dock to the prison, which he never again was to quit except to die. Many of the friends who knew his excellence and worth,—who had seen the happiness of his home,—who had learned to love and esteem him and his exemplary family—pressed around him. It was only those who had seen the virtues of his child, and the devotion of her father, who could appreciate the strength of his feelings, or attempt to justify the

dreadful violence he had committed. He appeared more overcome by this tribute of unsought commiseration than by all his calamities.

It may be supposed that his devoted wife was never absent from his side after his condemnation—not so; her active, energetic mind was indefatigably working in every available channel, in order to excite the pity and secure the mercy of the Sovereign—the attribute

> ———"that becomes
> The throned monarch better than his crown!"

Difficulties of all sorts interposed themselves; the forms of office, the absence of the Secretary through whose department any petition or representation must go; the impracticability of any personal appeal,—all these embarrassments she encountered; and the efforts she had so earnestly made and continued until within twelve hours of the fatal moment remained unsuccessful and apparently unnoticed.

After the fatigues of the day on the Saturday, poor Fanny visited her wretched husband and cheered him with hopes that even yet all would be well. His dear Mary was in the best hands; and as it was considered impossible to permit her to visit her father, she was kept in total ignorance of the result of his trial, or of the dreadful position in which he was placed. Gray felt consoled by the knowledge that his dear child was spared all this affliction—he inquired with solicitude as to the funeral of his victim, and his mind, prepared by the almost constant attendance and pious exertions of

the clergyman, to whom he had addressed a note to request his visits, had resumed his habitual temperament. On the subject of a pardon he never was sanguine; the time was too short for a full explanation of the circumstances, or anything like a palliation of his conduct, and when the Sunday afternoon arrived, he gave up all thoughts of this world, and having made such arrangements as were essentially necessary under the circumstances with regard to his family affairs, surrendered himself up to the certainty of death on the following morning, and felt assured that he should not in his last moments disgrace the character he had always maintained for courage and resolution.

But how was Fanny employed at this very moment? What had she done? What had been the results of her incessant toils? Even at the eleventh hour came the blessing. Reference had been made to the Judge who had tried the case—his answer was favourable—at least sufficiently so to justify the extension of mercy. At ten o'clock on Sunday night the precious document reached the hands of the triumphant preserver of her husband. Again should she place him in his home, to pray for forgiveness from Heaven for the commission of a deed to which he had been hurried almost unconsciously. There would be time for repentance, and she would assuage his sorrows, confirm his faith, and support his hope, and blend her prayers with his and Mary's, whose gentle heart, once healed, would learn to pity and forgive the deed her father had done in love for her and revenge of her ill-treatment.

With eager haste did the delighted Fanny urge the driver of the chaise that conveyed her to Kingston to make more speed—the horses almost flew, yet seemed to her to lag and crawl. The prison-gate at last was reached; her first act was to deliver a letter directed to the keeper, and one addressed to the high-sheriff or his deputy. She knew their contents, for in her bosom she bore the official announcement of the pardon. To-morrow the doors would fly open to set her husband free, and she should all her life be blest by knowing that she had been his deliverer.

She stole, with the greatest caution to the cell where the unconscious criminal lay sleeping. She entered, but he heard her not; she made a signal to the gaoler, who had himself accompanied her, to put down the light, and leave her to break the glad tidings to her husband. Armed as he was with the legal authority for releasing him from all restraint, he did as he was desired, not without expressing by signs to the lady his own delight at the result of her negociations.

Gray slept so soundly that Fanny hesitated to wake him. She sat, in a tremor of delight, anxious for the instant when he should raise himself on his pillow, and when she might cautiously communicate her tidings. Nearly an hour elapsed, when, almost wondering at the soundness of his repose at such a moment, she took a candle, and proceeded to the bed-side. She held up the light, to gaze upon his slumbering features, when, uttering a scream so loud and shrill that it rang through the vaulted passages of the prison in countless

echoes,—she fell senseless on the stone floor of the dungeon.

The noise brought the gaoler and an assistant to the place, where they beheld the happy wife of the pardoned prisoner stretched at his feet. They knew not what to think. The gaoler approached the bed, and turning down the sheet, astonished that the screams of his wife should not have awaked its tenant, they beheld the unfortunate man dead, and weltering in his blood.

On the quilt lay a strip of paper, with these words written on it:—"I could die with happiness in the field—I can die by my own hand—but I cannot die by the hands of an executioner. God bless my wife and my child—all those who have been so kind to me in my misfortunes—accept my thanks and gratitude."

A word more would be superfluous. The widowed mother and daughter still survive, but in the deepest seclusion. The career of Gray most strongly illustrates the danger of yielding to violent passion, and the rash termination of his existence, at the moment he was saved from what he had not the power to endure, teaches us never, even in the deepest distress, to encourage despair, remembering the proverb which says "WHILE THERE IS LIFE THERE IS HOPE."

THE END.